


# Braille Monitor



NOVEMBER, 1974

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

*A Publication of the*  
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## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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### PRESIDENT JERNIGAN HAS SURGERY

On Wednesday, October 9, President Jernigan entered Iowa Methodist Hospital, and surgery was performed to repair an intestinal tear on Thursday morning. By Thursday evening, much to his doctor's dismay, he was pushing the limits of his energy by conducting some Federation business on the telephone.

President Jernigan made good progress and returned home on Tuesday, October 15, under strict orders to stay quietly in bed for another few days and to do no work.

Federationists around the country join in prayer for the speedy and complete recovery of their leader. □

### NFB, HEW, AND NAC MEETING OF AUGUST 12, 1974

A most important meeting took place in Washington, D.C., on August 12, 1974—a meeting concerning NAC and its relations with the ultimate consumers of the services it accredits, the blind of the Nation. That the Government viewed the meeting as one of consequence was made plain. If the plans for solving the problems are carried through, the blind in this country will have made a real break with the past and will have a voice in what happens to their lives.

The meeting brought into sharp view the contrasting philosophies of the NFB and NAC—the one with its belief in independence, and the other with its entrenched custodialism.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Andrew S. Adams, Commissioner of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); and SRS Associate Administrator, Dr. Gary Massel.

Appearances were made by William Usdane, Assistant Commissioner for Progress Development, on behalf of the Rehabilitation Services Administration; by

Daniel Robinson, president of NAC's Board; Richard Bleecker, NAC's executive director designate; Howard Hansen, chairman of a NAC ad hoc committee on consumer participation; President Jernigan, Mr. John Taylor, and Mr. James Gashel on behalf of the NFB.

Five issues on the agenda were: (1) the makeup of the NAC Board; (2) the validity of the accrediting process; (3) input of consumer groups in the accrediting process at the agency level; (4) the lack of openness of NAC meetings; and (5) review of some NAC standards.

President Jernigan's opening statement summarized the efforts of the NFB to make NAC more open and more responsive to blind consumers. NAC, he states, "is not simply a private organization operating privately, but is in every sense of the word a public body, and, therefore, should not be holding private meetings to discuss major policy." That the Congress continues to be concerned about the right of the blind to be consulted and the inaction of the Department of the HEW was underlined when President Jernigan read

the recent letters on these subjects from Senator Abraham Ribicoff and Senator Lowell Weicker. [These letters appear in *The Braille Monitor*, October 1974.] President Jernigan stated the NFB position in crisp, firm terms: "We want NAC to be truly open. We want NAC to be truly receptive. We mean by that, not that the consumer should have a majority on NAC, but that the consumer should be able to have elected representatives on the Board." Later, he added: "We do not at all wish to preclude either the American Council or the Blinded Veterans from having their say." He continued:

"Now, we are here to tell you that if you will recognize us as a representative organization of the blind trying to work cooperatively with you, and instead of fighting us and resisting our having any voice or input, we are prepared to work with you. We are prepared to do all that we can to try to establish a mutually beneficial relationship.

We are not prepared, however, to have our representative character denied. We are not prepared to have it said that we are simply one of many organizations of the blind, or that we are the only ones who are sort of mavericks and hostile and everyone else is getting on. That isn't really the way it is, and if we must, we will continue to battle. But if we can establish some mutual grounds of respect, if we can arrive at some kind of notion of basic understanding, then I think all blind people can benefit."

Mr. Robinson's statement on behalf of the NAC Board was very brief, for he soon turned the floor over to the head of the NAC staff, associate executive director Dr. Richard Bleecker. However, he made two comments before doing so. First, he

observed that he thought the group which was present should deal with the specific charges brought by NFB against NAC; and second, that the history of how they came to be at the meeting should be recited.

Dr. Bleecker read his statement. Some of it reveals more about NAC and agency attitudes about the blind than he may be aware. After making some talk about improving services for the blind and visually handicapped he said that NAC has always tried to work with all interested agencies, groups, and organizations. Then Dr. Bleecker set forth the elements for improving accountability of agencies and schools that provide services to improve services for the blind and visually handicapped:

"First, of course, the persons who are being served—patients, students, clients, other users of services—should benefit. They should be getting quality care, education, rehabilitation service, or whatever has been accredited, in accordance with their own needs and interests.

Second, the practitioners should benefit because they are employed in a setting that challenges the best they can do and because their associates are well qualified and committed to continuous upgrading of their knowledge, skills, and services.

Third, the local community benefits because a needed service is being competently provided to its citizens.

Fourth, the national community as embodied in our Federal Government benefits. Obviously, all the benefits I have mentioned add up to national benefits. But there are special benefits that have become

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increasingly apparent to the Congress and to the executive branch of the Federal Government and which have caused them to make increasing use of accreditation as an instrument of national policy.”

Note especially the listing under “First.” Persons being served, in his mind, are first of all “patients” who should be getting “quality care.” Then, if the blind ever escape that classification, they become students and can advance to the class of rehabilitation client.

Dr. Bleecker talked about standards and voluntary self-regulating agencies and listed certain criteria published in the *Federal Register* about different kinds of accrediting involved in other programs, as he said, “to help bring about quality services and agency accountability,” without noting for or to whom.

At one point Dr. Bleecker read the questions considered by the NAC Board when looking over candidates for board membership. A close look at the questions indicates that members are chosen largely on their ability to enhance the financial and organizational status of the board and NAC.

Given this patient-quality-care-improve-the-NAC-image philosophy, one begins to comprehend why it has been so difficult to make NAC understand what NFB has been talking about. The blind, to one who believes in the NAC philosophy, are obviously to be protected and cared for—the age-old image. A certain few escape, as Robert Scott in his *Making of Blind Men* erroneously notes, because they have money, talent, or some other very special ingredient. And just as obviously, such an exceptional person is the President

of the National Federation of the Blind, who is belligerently attacking these well-intentioned NACers for his own satisfaction. After all, how can one provide quality care, education, and training—chosen by the agencies—for a “patient” who is insistent upon pursuing his own way through life largely by his own efforts in concert with his fellow blind? Perhaps the NFB is finally “beginning” to get “through” to NAC. “Beginning” is a word chosen with care, for the re-education of NACers is not going to be a short course. However, with the aid and interest of many members of both Houses of Congress, and understanding Federal officials such as Dr. Adams, we have made a “beginning.”

NAC’s own self-image is revealed in Dr. Bleecker’s statement:

“Although NAC performs the same basic functions as all other accrediting bodies, it has tried to provide for a set of checks and balances among those functions. In this it resembles our own national Constitution to a considerable extent.

The Board of Directors may be said to correspond to the executive branch. It sets policies and is legally responsible for the fiscal support and accountability of the organization.

The Commission on Standards corresponds to the legislative branch. Using the broadest possible input, it draws up, and, with board approval, promulgates revised and additional standards for which there appears to be need.

The Commission on Accreditation corresponds to the judiciary. . . .”

Mr. Howard Hansen, chairman of NAC’s ad hoc committee on consumer

participation, was asked by Mr. Robinson if he had anything to say. It would seem that Mr. Hansen did:

"Well, I only had one point. In Dick's presentation, he had "two and a half years ago at the Consumer Council," if I remember correctly. We had, I think, some exciting times here in terms of innovating approaches to accreditation and to representation of the consumer. I am delighted to serve on the ad hoc committee and delighted to be coming to grips, face to face, with the proposal that we have in involvement of the consumer in all aspects. I know, as Ken and John both know, in my own professional role I have always had involvement of consumers in our advisory committee and in our policy making, and so, consequently, I am a real believer in it and hope that this meeting will be fruitful in that regard."

After the opening statements, the talk got down to what alternatives and options were available to getting NAC and NFB working together—and the hard facts of elected consumer representation on the NAC Board. Robinson repeated his arguments about never having organizational representation and the difficulties which would be encountered with their charter and bylaws. With President Jernigan pushing hard, there then ensued an exchange on how and in what numbers the NFB could or would be represented which was countered by statements of resistance on the part of NAC. Chairman Massel then intervened:

"Let me see if I can move us off center for a moment. I know I don't want to espouse any view of the best way of getting representation; however, I think consistently running throughout the Rehab

Act of 1973, and correct me if I am wrong, there is a stress from Congress on increased consumer representation. Consumer is the individual who is being dealt with, and I think that is a policy we can all agree with.

One proposal has been put forth. What I would like to hear, if I can, from NAC: Are there some specific steps to address this proposal or some counter-proposals that would move in this direction of getting, you know, increased consumer representation?

You know, independent of the relative size of NFB to any other organizations, I think we would all have to agree that they do probably represent or have more representatives of the blind population, and clearly I think it is true that we can also accept that NFB advocates a particular way of dealing with or serving the blind and in that sense they may not represent the total blind population, but they clearly, by virtue of their membership, do represent a large membership and a relatively outspoken membership.

So I think the question we have to address in terms of proposals is specifically, either what can be done with regard to the specific NFB proposal, at least in principle, if not in detail, or what other options exist to address the particular problem of increased representation of organized representatives of the blind or visually handicapped in terms of people dealing with services to that population? Can anyone suggest any specific steps that NAC can take in either addressing the specific NFB proposal or providing a set of counterproposals?

I think we have to deal with specific proposals or else we are going to be,

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frankly, in the same position of debating two points of view. We either continue the situation that exists or we try to find some options, you know, that are acceptable to both groups."

The discussion shifted briefly to the formulation of NAC standards and any NFB participation in the original considerations with opposing views set forth. But it was brought back to the consideration of representation by Dr. Massel who posed two questions: "I would like, if possible, to get something from NAC on (1) how NAC might address the specific NFB proposal, or (2) how might NAC bring forward some specific counterproposals?"

Dr. Bleecker tried to broaden the issue by saying that there were three groups "deserving of representation on the governing board. That would be from users of services, from accreditation and schools, and from the general public." Then he added a fourth in the shape of the professionals and technicians at the level of service delivery. Dr. Bleecker then made some talk about the traditional model by which "professional organizations" do their work and how NAC had differed by including the professionals as partners in promulgating standards and managing organizations.

But Chairman Massel was not to be put off. While he recognized, he said, the difficulty in coming to grips with all demands and requests for representation, "I think one still has to make a decision with regard... to the need for the particular representation of various groups... They have to be answered either no, an alternative, or yes."

Mr. Robinson thought that it would create monumental problems and be disastrous if any organization should "be given the right to select and therefore elect a quota for our board."

Dr. Massel then suggested that it was proper to try to get NAC to address the issue of the reasonableness of allocating some percentage of the board, which would be selected from "a list coming from a consumer organization." He did not suggest numbers, only proposed that it could be done.

Mr. Robinson replied that the board "would want to examine it and it is in fact examining." President Jernigan pointed out that if one wanted to cut up the board membership pie to be shared by all who might be interested it could go on ad infinitum but would not deal with the issue of representation by the blind of the country. Mr. Robinson continued his explanations and then talked about the activities of NAC's ad hoc committee on consumer representation which was charged with coming back to the NAC Board with recommendations after discussing it with consumer groups. The committee, Mr. Robinson reported, had already met with the ACB and hoped to meet with NFB and the BVA. He thought that the NFB demand for one-third consumer representation on the board "would put the board in a totally untenable position."

The co-chairmen then stepped in:

Chairman MASSEL. I don't think we have a legal mandate in any sense to force our role as mediators, but I think in terms of our interest in this population and other populations, we have a very strong interest



in finding other situations. Might I suggest, if both sides are agreeable, and I have not discussed this with Andy, that we ask NAC to consider and perhaps we set a date for NAC to come forward to suggest some specific options, either considering the NFB proposal or counterproposals that we can deal with in the form of some very specific options for resolving this question?

Chairman ADAMS. Yes, my thoughts are we have a specific proposal that is an issue and the overriding issue, which is that NFB is a major organization representing all consumers in a given population. And, as Gary has mentioned, the fact that we should give major attention to consumer involvement and the accreditation aspect is something that HEW has emphasized in order to bring high standards, high quality, to the rehabilitation programs. It seems to me, on those two points, that we have a situation where our accreditation organization, NAC, is in high controversy with a major consumer organization. This could handicap immensely, as I am sure it has already, the goal of NAC in the area of accreditation. I don't see that it can be separated. In other words, I don't see where NAC can say that accreditation has to go on according to—or our organization has to go on—according to certain ground rules to meet the purpose of accreditation. Because a major organization can make it very difficult to achieve those purposes even though the mechanics of NAC were perfect. As I look at NFB, I see that certainly if they hold to a high criticism and overt activity toward NAC that they are endangering or hurting the purposes of accreditation, that is, to bring about quality in programs for the blind and visually handicapped.

So it seems to me that both parties here have high stakes and high risks involved for

the purpose which the organizations represent. So I think that I would agree with Gary, that since this issue has emerged as the predominant one this morning, that NAC should respond to the issue. It would take time for NAC to respond, I am sure, and then a meeting, a follow-up meeting, should be held.

But, also, I see as an important matter, that both parties keep responding. And I say keep responding because you have been making an effort to find how your organizations can come closer, in addition to this issue, because it seems to me that unless you get closer, the purposes of both organizations can be hurt; and, therefore, our interests can be hurt in terms of providing the best services to handicapped people.

Chairman MASSEL. Would it be reasonable to set a specific date to meet again with a response representing the NAC Board on the specific proposals made by NFB? And, if possible, on other proposals?

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Chairman, may I speak regarding that?

Chairman MASSEL. Surely.

Mr. HANSEN. I think two things are very interesting in this discussion. One is, as I said earlier, I am excited about the innovation that is coming about. Thanks to the Federation, they are stimulating NAC to have consumers on the board of directors. I don't think any other accrediting body in the United States has consumers represented as board members. I think it is a good thing; I think it is something that we need and should have had a long time ago in many fields, including the health field.

The ad hoc committee which Mr. Robinson appointed, if I can speak for that, I feel that the membership is committed to working out a way in which the blind consumer will be represented, and this committee has had one meeting and plans to have two more in the immediate future, and I think that should be borne in mind when you consider another date.

We are ready and willing to meet with the National Federation and also with the Blinded Veterans, and we will agree to do so posthaste to come to a conclusion on representation, at least to have a significant representation of consumers.

I think this is our commitment and this is our challenge from our president, and we hope to come back with some alternative plans from him and from the board which you will consider.

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The talk about the ad hoc committee brought up the subject of NAC openness which was discussed along with the fact that some counterproposal should come for consideration before the NAC fall board meeting. President Jernigan explored with the group the powers of the ad hoc committee to make sure that the NFB would be dealing with people in policy making positions. When Mr. Robinson demurred on coming to decisions and presenting the proposal to the board at the fall meeting on grounds of budget and expense and agenda, Chairman Massel suggested that there be a meeting of the ad hoc committee and the NAC Executive Committee. Mr. Robinson thought that the committee might meet with the executive committee and then said, "we would then be faced with the [possibility] of the board

taking an opposite view." It seemed agreed that the earliest moment that the group in Washington could have positive proposals would be the middle of November.

The co-chairmen then inquired about the first meeting with the Washington group at which they suggested they would hear completed staff work involving the executive committee and hear what would be presented to the full board, and that, therefore, Dr. Jernigan and his associates could be there if they chose. At that point President Jernigan pointed out that NFB representatives have been excluded from such meetings in the past and he asked Mr. Robinson directly: "I would like to know from Mr. Robinson what the likelihood is that the NAC Executive Committee would permit observers to be present at its meetings and what the likelihood is that it will make available minutes of those meetings to the observers."

Mr. ROBINSON. Let me say that I don't think I have a right to put our board in a position of where they are being stonewalled with respect to a particular position, or that a series of negotiations or representations were made to a point where they either accept them or get off the board. I think we have seen enough of that kind of activity elsewhere and I don't think we need to bring it into the board of NAC. . . .

Chairman MASSEL. I think of it more as a working session, not where you would make commitments, but once having the consideration of the ad hoc group, having talked to several organizations, having discussed it with several members of the board, that in fact it would be a session in which one could then react; and those reactions could then be presented to the

board for their consideration. That was really the discussion, rather than in any sense getting that committee to make agreements.

Mr. ROBINSON. When you say one could react, who's the one, and what could they react to?

Chairman MASSEL. Well, Dr. Adams and myself being one, and then—well, we can go on. And there are other issues. Let me suggest that perhaps you could consider these and maybe respond back to Dr. Adams as to what looks like a reasonable schedule with no later than, say, the middle of November, at that time, you know, to get together after the full board meeting. I think that is critical. I think we have to deal with the specific issues no later than that if a working session like this is possible.

President JERNIGAN. If I understood what Dr. Adams proposed, after this ad hoc committee gets together with NFB and anybody else that it chooses, that then some talk be had and that it report back to its executive committee. Then that representatives of NAC and NFB and HEW try to get together and work out some formal proposals, final proposals, and that they then go to the NAC Board.

As I understand Mr. Robinson, he says that isn't practical, that that is an insult to the intelligence of the board, and that that isn't to be done in that way. He would rather leave it much looser so that the board could be much more involved in arriving at any final proposals.

What bothers me about that is that in the meantime time will slip by, we will get to the middle of November and come back to

a meeting, and the NAC Board will simply propose that certain proposals be considered and we will be down yonder in the next year, still as far at cross purposes as ever.

Is there any way in which we can get some kind of proposal from the NAC Executive Committee? The board does not have to accept it. Some kind of proposal, presumably hammered out between the ad hoc committee and NFB followed up by the NAC Executive Committee, which, hopefully, could get some kind of approval at the upcoming board meeting, so we could try and settle this matter?

Chairman ADAMS. Mr. Robinson, you inferred, and I don't remember the exact words you used, but if you want, meaning Gary and myself, I think we want to make it clear that as Gary has been using the word "suggested," that we are merely in a suggestive role here to try to help both your organizations, and you are not responding to what we want. I think it is most important that you and Dr. Jernigan agree on what you both want, if possible.

Mr. ROBINSON. All right, then if that is the case, then I would suggest that we let the whole process of exploration and policy formulation and execution through its whole process. We are not talking about a board meeting six months away or a year away. We are talking about a board meeting which is only some weeks away, and let the process take its—go through and be executed and that we schedule a meeting here again or in Chicago at the Palmer House or wherever, to then discuss specific proposals as far as we are concerned, and we would know that everybody is operating within the framework of a range of activity that the board has agreed to;



and thereafter that you could consummate something immediately rather than getting involved in a lot of discussions which are premature and prior to the board getting fully involved. As a matter of fact, you know, scheduling such a meeting would be a possibility right now.

In view of the fact that you know this discussion, dialogue, or lack of it, has been going on for a period of many years, I think a few weeks is really not going to make any difference to us.

President JERNIGAN. Could we know what those processes are that he talked about, that is, the specifics. I presume the first one would be the getting together of the ad hoc committee with us. Then what would Mr. Robinson see as being the next process in the matter anyway?

Mr. ROBINSON. They need to have time to formulate a series of proposals or a single proposal by the ad hoc committee, whatever their wish is, which would have to be presented for discussion, acceptance, modification, agreement, what have you, to the board of directors. This would then empower, I would assume that the result of that, if it went ahead positively, and we could certainly bend all of our efforts that it be in that direction, would empower certain officers or persons either on the staff and/or on the board, both, of NAC to proceed with deliberation, you know, to work out an agreement that would be within that frame of reference, an agreement with NFB and ACB and BVA and anybody else.

Chairman MASSEL. Well, can we schedule a meeting on or about November 15th? I would prefer it, I think, if NAC and Mr. Hansen of that committee would get

together with NFB and, I think, it is the Blinded Veterans, the other organization you mentioned, as soon as possible and make it not any later than that. If it is possible to have a meeting in the interim which would result in reactions to the specific proposals so that those reactions could be presented to the Board, I will leave that up to your judgement, but no later than November 15th.

Mr. HANSEN. It may be that this ad hoc committee may want to have a joint meeting with representation from ACB, NFB, and BVA prior to the submittal of their own report.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Hansen, we did not commit ACB. I don't want to do that. I don't want you to go away believing that.

Mr. HANSEN. My friend, when we come up with a policy it must be equal to the three organizations.

President JERNIGAN. We don't care about your meeting with anybody you choose and we do not object to sitting down in a NAC Board meeting, but we don't want to hold a joint meeting with ACB.

Chairman ADAMS. May I suggest here again that I think we are dealing with two, at this moment, highly related issues. That is the issues of consumer involvement, re: Dr. Jernigan's proposal; and two, with the understandings and communications between NAC and the major NFB—I want to correct that, a major—I didn't want to offend other associations—but a major organization representing the blind, NFB. so I think you have both of those issues. If you don't consider the latter issue and go through the process dealing with the

waterfront of consumer involvement and not tackle this latter issue, then I think time will slip by and we won't be a step further after this meeting than we were before.

So I would suggest that you give real consideration to how you can push forward on both issues even though they are highly related.

Mr. ROBINSON. I wonder if you might want to particularize that, Dr. Adams, so you could give us some examples of what you are talking about?

Chairman ADAMS. I guess what I am saying is that there are actual accusations being made by NFB. They are either valid—of lack of communication and coordination, and certainly probably a lack of trust at this moment. NFB says that a lot of that could be resolved if they had this kind of representation on the board.

Gary has said that this may not be the only area for getting a board with communication and trust and a working relationship. I think that is as particularizing as I can get. So in particular to this board recommendation, and what other possible answers we are getting at that are possible, and my suggestion is that you explore hard those possibilities together with the issue—

Mr. ROBINSON. I am glad you clarified that because I thought you were saying something quite different from that; and let me just state again the charge of the committee, of the ad hoc committee, is to do exactly what you have stated, but it is not to do so exclusively or uniquely with respect to any one organization.

I am not sure whether I hear you saying that we should deal one way with NFB because they have been attacking us, and another way with other organizations because they have not been attacking us.

Chairman ADAMS. I guess I am saying that at this moment, because of the great concern in the rehabilitation community, especially in the blind and visually handicapped community. I guess I am saying that there comes a time when their organizations should consider giving some special attention to the magnitude of this relationship of this situation.

Mr. ROBINSON. You mean to NFB itself?

Chairman ADAMS. Yes, I guess I am saying that. You know, we offered our assistance to help resolve some of these differences between these two organizations because we sense the importance of it, not only for accreditation, but for what can be done to bring our populations together. As we well know, in the overall aims of rehabilitation, we have many other populations that we have to hang together, to work with, in the broader picture, and if we have splits in our smaller segments, then I think we have difficulties. So what I am saying in one way here, is that we sense that this dispute is of high priority, and that is why we are having the meeting together today, and I think both of you sense this. So for that reason I would hope that you would consider the attention needed here as beyond that of any other organization. Now tomorrow that might differ, when the minutes get out and another organization gets involved, but at least today the realism is that we have a major dispute between your two portions.

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Mr. ROBINSON. You just used the word that I would like to correct if I may, about a "dispute" between two major organizations.

Chairman ADAMS. I stand corrected. A misunderstanding, some misunderstanding.

Mr. ROBINSON. The agenda is a series of charges against NAC. There are no charges against NFB. There is no dispute with respect to the charges except as to whether the NAC Board is to be controlled by NFB or some other such situation. So the dispute there is whether or not one organization has the right to preempt another organization's duly constituted activities.

I don't mean to indicate either that we apply no special significance to NFB or to their attacks on us or to our relationship with them. We have not appeared in any meeting with any other organization, and we have certainly not expended as many resources in attempting to communicate effectively, and apparently not too well, so I think that all of our actions in evidence and everything else testifies to that fact of what we further want to do and explore.

But I think it does become a situation where one cannot always give and the other one receive. There needs to be some mutuality of objectives in working together. You know you can't have one horse and one rider.

President JERNIGAN. You know, to say there has been no dispute and that there are not charges from NAC is one of the strangest comments I have heard. There have been deliberate overt attempts to destroy—and I am not just talking about the NFB attempting with NAC. We will tell

you very frankly that we have felt that NAC needed reforming or restructuring. I can also bring documented evidence that NAC has deliberately been involved in character attacks and organization attacks. Be that as it may, it is concerned with something else that Mr. Robinson says, and that is that we are going back to a concept, which is, should we treat NFB as different from other organizations because they have been attacking us? The answer is, no, not for that reason, but for another reason.

The Soviet Union deals quite differently with Luxembourg and the United States, not because one is attacking and one is not, but because of their relative size, strength, and relevancy to world populations.

We are saying to NAC, and they do not hear us very well, it is not as if you got together the UAW and General Motors and Chrysler and American Motors and Ford and said there are five of us; now, why can't you over there in the UAW get along with the four of us? All the others are getting along. We are simply saying to NAC that we are not just one more "national organization." We are, in truth, much larger than anything else in the field as a national organization of consumers and you don't have to hunt to find the reason for that; you can go to our Convention and people are there. We are going to be dealt with as a consumer organization and a consumer sponsor. Now that is where it has got to be finally, and if it isn't that way, then I think there can't be peace in the field.

I would go beyond that to say this: Whatever the ad hoc committee may come up with, I think NAC has some obligation, or the NAC representatives here, at least, to present proposals to their board concerning consumer representation on that board. I

would appreciate it if they would let us come and make our own representation. I think they have to do that.

I also would appreciate a response to the question whether they will or will not open their executive committee meetings to others, and whether they will or will not let us have copies of minutes in view of the act that policy decisions, as witnessed here today, are made by that committee.

In other words, we are dealing with openness and representation and a basic concept of what they are and what we are.

Mr. TAYLOR. . . . If we are going to work together we have got to rid ourselves of our thoughts of these feelings that result in a failure to communicate, as the words we use just aren't the same. The NFB statement said one thing, and when it is reflected back, it says another.

Mr. ROBINSON. Let me just respond to a couple of questions that Dr. Jernigan made.

Number one, I would be personally responsible for seeing to it that the NFB proposal is presented to the full board. I would appreciate it if in order not to make a mistake or inadvertently use the wrong word or misrepresent or leave anybody with a false impression, I would even be glad to read a statement prepared by Dr. Jernigan. If he wishes to attend the meeting to which he is invited, of course, he may make his own presentation if he wishes. He may do both or neither, depending on what he wishes. As far as I am concerned, he may consider that as a personal obligation that I will take on.

Chairman ADAMS. May I react to that? That is appreciated, but looking beyond

that, and again I don't know the philosophy of your board as to the recommendations of the staff.

The other direction would be, the other possibility is, that NAC's staff, following perhaps the executive committee, and for the reasons you gave, the full board—not the executive committee, but your full staff—would continue meeting with the NFB staff, and come up with an administrative recommendation to the board. Again, I don't know if your board appreciates administrative recommendation with a firmness. Some boards do, some say you are trapping us, and I understand this, and I don't know what your board does. But if your board does accept firm administration recommendation from the staff, my recommendation would be that the two parties here could come up with a firmer recommendation on this issue—whether it be pro or con, from your viewpoint, Mr. Robinson—to come up with a firmer recommendation on it so that we wouldn't be moving from immediately where we are right now to November; but that something will happen between where we are and November, in terms of at least considering a firmer recommendation, I can see that if you go to the board and say that this is what NFB has proposed, what is your reaction, we will be right back where we are today.

Mr. ROBINSON. No, the form of operation of our board is that a series of items are on the agenda, specific recommendations are made, they go through Roberts Rules of Order, discussion of the motion and some motions have been approved and some are modified, and so on, and therefore the board does get firm recommendations from staff as to what the staff believes would be both efficacious and

wise and that sort of thing. It does not mean that the board would accept it and necessarily put a rubber stamp on it.

I think this is what we want to avoid because after recommendation of consumer groups is solidified by the board that those new members on the board would not want to be put in that position themselves another day.

President JERNIGAN. I wonder if Mr. Robinson would respond to the other question on the executive committee.

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, I think I indicated to you before that our committee meetings are not open to public participation. Our board of directors and our corporate meeting is, all of which is, I think, made public record. Our committee meetings end with a series of recommendations to the board and are presented to the board and the board accepts, rejects, modifies, or whatever, and the only standing that it has is that it has been accepted, and if not accepted, it doesn't exist and has no force and effect, and it is agency history. So as was indicated by Dr. Bleecker, the minutes of the board's meeting are to be written in such a way, and have been written in such a way, that the substance of the recommendation that has been acted upon by the board and the background and so forth are clearly evident in those meetings. Therefore, we believe that that is at least equal to the charge of openness, and in excess of any other organization similar to ours that we know of and is also paralleled by many other organizations.

President JERNIGAN. Dr. Adams, if it is true that the committee actions have no standing until approved by the board, no substance except simply recommendations,

how, then, can this committee which has been appointed to meet with NFB and the other groups that have been mentioned, how can that committee function? So that is a fairly important policy matter, if I understood Mr. Robinson correctly.

Mr. ROBINSON. I don't know whether you did or not, Ken, but I could say it over again if you wish.

President JERNIGAN. Yes. I wish you would.

Mr. ROBINSON. That the committee is charged with meeting with you, hopefully, you and your associates and with others, to enter into a dialogue to discover what would constitute meaningful participation of the board members, process of accreditation, standard setting, and so forth.

President JERNIGAN. I understand that, and since that is true, what I am asking is, since it is charged with that, then that seems to contradict what you said earlier as I understood it, and that is that the executive committee takes no action except a series of recommendations it might make to the board, that it couldn't set up a committee like that and have that committee go forward and function.

Chairman MASSEL. Isn't that in some way just an administrative action by setting up an ad hoc committee to develop action by the executive committee? My understanding of the committee is that it has no policy-making world, but only a fact-finding world, to insure that both the executive committee and the committee has a series of options to choose from; that those options represent a wide range of views and, Mr. Robinson, as you said, at



least that committee, and the report of the executive committee and the report to the full committee would at a minimum relate as one option, the NFB proposal; and that, as you indicated, Dr. Jernigan would be permitted to even speak and present that himself.

President JERNIGAN. All right, as I understand, the executive committee will not be open to observers and the executive committee has power, whatever they may call it, to take a totally new policy direction in the sense of having a policy committee go out and negotiate with people with whom it earlier said it wouldn't negotiate.

Mr. ROBINSON. That isn't what I said. It is being characterized in a manner which is not in accordance with the facts, and if you wish to go over it again, I will repeat it. It would be easier if I made a tape and played it.

Mr. TAYLOR. Let me just ask, if I understand what you said, Dan, it was: one, that we will not have an opportunity to know what goes on in the executive committee by having observers, that is, it will be a closed meeting; and that we will not have minutes of it.

Mr. ROBINSON. You didn't hear me say that.

Mr. TAYLOR. Let me ask it another way, then. Will we be allowed to attend the executive committee?

Mr. ROBINSON. Traditionally the procedure under which our board functions is that the public, or there is a definition of what constitutes public, and I am not going to try to repeat it verbatim, but that

interested observers representing national organizations of the blind or interested observers of the blind are invited and can send representatives, and others can ask for a specific time on the agenda in the public portion of the meeting to make statements or make representations, or what have you. Committee meetings are not open to the public in the same sense that the board is. Persons who are not members of the committee or even members of the board have been asked to attend committee meetings and have been asked to do so on an ad hoc basis, therefore. That basis is the way we have operated and that is the way we at the moment must continue to operate until such time as a change of policy is created. And I would not want to rule out the possibility that that policy itself may change.

As far as minutes are concerned, the minutes of the board contain those recommendations made by the executive committee and any other committee that have been acted upon and approved by the board, and, therefore, have substance, is the way we operate.

Chairman ADAMS. There seems to be one area here that lacks agreement and maybe can be resolved—and that is that NAC says at the table here that you are willing that your administrative committee for consumer involvement meet with the NFB. But you also say that that meeting will involve, will have other organizations in attendance?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, no. Let me step back and try to give this some perspective.

As Dick mentioned, Dr. Adams, a year and a half ago a motion was made—as a matter of fact I think I was the one who

put the motion before the board in December of '72—to recommend that the board approve the concept that a consumer advisory council be formed for the purpose, as I phrased it, of closing the communication gap, the accreditation process, and the feedback from the consumers as to the efficacies of that process. And specifically we were talking about, at that time, of getting an input from persons who were not only blind or visually handicapped and not only received services, but had received services from an accredited agency after they had been accredited because they were trying to get back in the accreditation process.

During that time various methods were designed by staff and presented to the board and were found to be either inoperable from a financial point of view, and we found some of these to be inoperable from a public posture point of view; and they would appear to be, as you would say, tokenism or formalism and other such things and wouldn't be valid.

Other things have taken place from time to time concerning participation in the whole process, and, as we stated before, the problem in the accreditation process is something that we have been involved in a long time. What happened was we had reached a point where going back to staff as they came up with a new set of proposals now did not seem to be the best way to go. Instead, an ad hoc committee of the board was created for the purpose of exploring directly with organizations of the blind and finding from them, in particular, individually, what their respective postures were, what they thought their requirements were, what they thought their needs were. And then that committee was to, in and of itself, try to synthesize this knowledge and come up with a series of recommendations which could then be presented to the board for its consideration. And that is exclusively what it amounts to. It is a

follow-up of what we started to do a year and a half ago.

Chairman ADAMS. So that ad hoc committee is planning to meet with NFB?

Mr. ROBINSON. As soon as this meeting is concluded and a telephone call is made.

Chairman ADAMS. Alone?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes. Let me say what I think Howard [Hansen] was saying was that obviously we are in a position to use terms like being whiplashed. There is more than one organization; yes, one organization is larger than the others. There is no argument about that; but certainly, simply because other organizations have sponsored and supported and been amenable to what we have been doing is not a reason to denigrate their posture and their constitution as well, and you are not asking us to do that.

I think what Howard was driving at is that at some point it might be necessary or desirable to have a joint meeting with all of these representatives, including you people, for the purpose of airing and coming to some ultimate conclusion. If, on the other hand, that appears to be an unacceptable condition, then I guess we are going to have to try to work it out some other way.

Chairman MASSEL. The ultimate conclusion resides with your board. I think what would probably be useful, and let me put this forward as a suggestion, in no way denigrating or belittling the responsibilities of the other organizations. I think, because of the uniqueness of the situation that has brought us to this table today, that it might be useful if even prior to the executive board meeting, if we could have a meeting like this and discuss the findings of this ad hoc committee; just to discuss, you know, the sense of options that are going to be set forward to make sure the strong views set

forth by NFB will be represented and they can comment on the findings—in no way to constrain the executive actions of the executive board, nor in any way to constrain the actions of the whole board, but to shorten the time of responsibilities. This way, rather than having a position come out of the Board and NFB wanting to make a counterproposal, at least this way we can assure before going into your board all the views are expressed. I don't think that would be constraining.

I suggest that to you and suggest that you consider that very strongly. But I think what we have agreed on is that we would meet no later than November 15th to discuss the resolution of the board. I will be very happy, and Dr. Adams, I am sure, would be happy, to hold that meeting in Chicago. We would like it to be where SRS and SRA would sponsor that meeting. We would like to keep that meeting to the same people that are here today, to keep this small group, because I think the discussion, while we have not resolved anything, has been productive—and to keep that small group. But I would like to add: I think it would be very useful if we could meet between now and November in some manner to discuss some substance of the proposals that may go before the executive board and to be sure that the executive board considered, while it may not be the recommendations of the committee, that there be some other options that are presented with some kind of arguments for their consideration.

Mr. ROBINSON. Let me discuss this again, because it becomes a very substantive thing.

If there are recommendations to be put before the board, whether or not

recommended by a committee or any other person, and there is any question about whether they would be put before the board, let me again personally and corporately guarantee to you that whatever they are it shall be done.

Now, if you can provide them to me, or if Dr. Jernigan can provide them to me, if you can tell me what it is you want to be sure gets before the board, I will personally guarantee that it gets before the board. I cannot guarantee that it would be recommended or that it would be approved: I can guarantee that it will be presented before the board. I don't think that an interim meeting to discuss, to make sure that it gets before the board is a necessity. I think it is a waste of time, actually.

Chairman ADAMS. I guess, if I can add here, I guess this is a key issue. It seems to me very important that NFB, if they submit a formal proposal for your board, get a staff reaction in light of the uniqueness, as Gary puts it, of this situation, gets reaction on their proposal, whether they are going to recommend it to the board or argue against it or be neutral, and I guess that is the kind of meeting we are talking about.

President JERNIGAN. Dr. Adams, their staff, though, I believe, doesn't play the part in view of the volunteer nature of the board, and I served on that board a good while. At least I believe I am speaking correctly that the staff is not at the policy level, generally. The board is, and, therefore, I am not sure it is going to serve much useful purpose to have a staff recommendation. But I would be most interested in knowing what kind of executive committee or presidential



recommendation we would get. Sometime before we are through with this meeting, and I know we are drawing close to it, I want to take five minutes to make a concluding statement.

Chairman MASSEL. I think we have at least agreed on the November 15th meeting. We have agreed it will be in Chicago.

Mr. ROBINSON. As far as whether or not a recommendation would be made, I think if you can provide us with what the request or demand or whatever it is, or proposal of NFB is, I will give you my personal reactions.

Mr. HANSEN. I think we are bypassing the ad hoc committee when we start talking about the action of this kind, because I am sure Ken and his group will have some feeling as to how this committee feels about his proposals and others that we may have to counter and to work out with him.

President JERNIGAN. But you at least have heard the one I have heard, that is clear?

Mr. HANSEN. Yes, I appreciate that, Ken, because I think it is an honest statement on your part and we would like to go into further discussions with it, and I will. And, as I said before, I think this committee is very sincerely committed to working out a methodology for having consumer input from the organized blind in this Nation. I am afraid, Dan, that should the board decide that none of the proposals are acceptable to them you may lose some board members, because we feel quite strongly about this.

Mr. ROBINSON. Surely.

Chairman MASSEL. Mr. Jernigan, if you want to make your statement?

President JERNIGAN. Yes. I want to begin by saying that I think this has been a productive meeting. We of the National Federation of the Blind hope that something can come out of this meeting and meetings to follow which will bring harmony and which will lead to a working together between, I could say among, all groups really concerned with services to the blind.

Now specifically, some of our concerns have not been met and have not been dealt with in this meeting. A prime concern has been the representation issue. I have told you already what our proposal is on representation on the NAC Board. We are prepared to go in with flexibility, we are prepared to go in with good faith. We are prepared to try to work out some kind of viable arrangement. It has, however, as a minimum, the objective of some consumer representation on that board at a larger scale than tokenism, responsive to and to some extent responsible to the largest organization of blind people in this country. That is one thing.

Beyond that, I would say that I am troubled by what Mr. Robinson has said, and what he has failed to say clearly about the policy of openness. The executive committee of NAC clearly does make policy: policy which was not contemplated by its board, and policy which is not simply a recommendation to its board. It clearly makes such policy. I give you two items as illustrative of this.

One of those would be the time that the NAC Board meeting was going to find itself

picketed, and the executive committee got together and changed the time and place of that meeting, which was more than simply procedural in the context.

The most recent is the appointment of the ad hoc committee. This is clearly, as witness Mr. Hansen's last statement, more than simply a minor procedural matter which is an extension of policy already established. It is new policy, policy I must say that we welcome.

But we would like to see the NAC Board meetings open and the NAC Executive Committee meetings open and we would like to see minutes of those meetings made available.

I would say that with respect to the quality of services—we didn't touch on that, but Dr. Adams was present at the National Federation of the Blind Convention in Chicago and heard a detailed description of the Lawrence Kettner case. The Minneapolis Society is accredited by NAC, yet that society has, in our opinion, clearly violated the Federal law and has done so in such a way that NAC could reasonably have known if it followed the prudent man rule.

We feel that not only in that instance but that in others the same thing has happened. I am aware, for instance, that NAC has told the Kansas agency that it must now make some representations concerning charges that have been made about it. But these things come after the fact and come too late.

We want accreditation to have something to do with the quality of services, and we think that has got to be dealt with.

We feel that the statement that has been often repeated must not be allowed to go unchallenged—that is, that the end result of NAC's work is the improvement of services. We believe that the end result so far has seemed at best to have had no effect on services for the blind and that at worst it has been to make services much worse than before they were accredited. Some good agencies have been accredited and some have not and some bad ones have been accredited.

We feel that some of the onsite review teams and the whole NAC machinery must have input, not just at the board level, but input from the organized blind movement. We don't believe we are simply one more organization contending in that kind of a little squabble like another organization. We believe we stand in the relationship to NAC, of labor to management, of farmers to the Agriculture Department, of blind consumers to blind service providers. Until these questions can be settled, then we must continue to behave in such a manner as to maintain a high degree of public visibility for that issue seems important to us and we will gladly meet with this committee. We will gladly meet in any way we can to try to resolve differences. We will try in good faith to bring about alterations of the present situation, and we will do it with flexibility.

I would like, if I can do so, to be present personally at the NAC meeting, and, if not, to have a representative to present any proposals we may have to the NAC Board. We will come prepared to be flexible and hope we can achieve some positive results.

I thank the members of HEW for calling this meeting and particularly want to give appreciation to Dr. Adams for his

comments at the National Federation of the Blind Convention and for listening to what we had to say. I think this was a real breakthrough and we are glad about it and appreciate it. I am also glad that the NAC people dealt with us on issues as explosive as these in a dispassionate way. We also disagree, however, that they have not been in a dispute with us. We feel they have.

So with that we will have to look forward to the next meeting and hope to make it successful.

Chairman ADAMS. There, again, I would like to respond. I think the comments were very constructive and I appreciate your comments of my personal attendance. I would add that your Convention in Chicago is one of the most impressive conventions conducted for and by the handicapped that I have ever attended, not only in terms of numbers, but in terms of enthusiasm and determination to, if at all possible, include services of not only the blind and visually handicapped but to all handicapped people. I really appreciated your invitation, and the fact that you gave me a key role on the program in order to

interact with your kind of people, and I thank you.

Chairman MASSEL. Mr. Robinson, would you like to make any final statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. Just to say thank you for taking the part that you have in this, and we look forward to a productive effort from here on out.

Chairman ADAMS. May I comment, too, Mr. Robinson? I certainly appreciate your attending and I appreciate the objectives of NAC which you are trying to achieve, and I appreciate the consideration you are giving to the feelings of NFB, and your desire to work them out. I look forward to working with both NAC and NFB in trying to resolve some of these issues so we can all be on the same team and have the same roles, purposes, and objectives.

Chairman MASSEL. Gentlemen, we will meet November 15th, if Mr. Jernigan's schedule permits.

[Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m., the hearing was concluded.] □

## CONVENTION BULLETIN

Those who have attended National NFB Conventions in the last few years do not need to be urged to make their plans early. Many made 1975 Convention reservations with the Palmer House when they checked out at the end of the 1974 Chicago Convention. The byword, if you expect to stay at the Headquarters hotel, is *make those reservations now!* The block of rooms set aside for the NFB last year, though considerably larger than that of the previous year, was gone by the end of May and many of us doubled up to make room for those who had not made their reservations in time. Some had to stay at other nearby hotels.

There are many things to do and see in this famous city. It boasts two major league baseball teams, summer theater, opera, and concerts abound, and the Museum of Science and Industry must be seen to be believed. Marshall Fields is a department store known world-wide for the great number of items offered for sale and for its quality merchandise. There are a number of other department stores and specialty shops near the Palmer House which is located in The Loop, Chicago's busy business center. Almost all public places and activities are available on good public transportation.

The Palmer House itself houses seven excellent restaurants, all very different; a number of interesting shops; provides attractive rooms and good service. It has an excellent swimming pool which was used by many Federationists last year. And where else will you find rooms for \$8.50 for singles and \$12 for doubles?

Two affiliates—Iowa and Minnesota—will share the joys and chores of hosting the NFB National Convention. President Jernigan is putting together another one of those action-packed, high-interest, exciting agendas. Divisions and standing committees are making plans far ahead. There will be another Elegant White Elephant Sale for the Endowment Fund; great exhibits; and many social events. And, of course, there will be prizes. At least there will be if state and local affiliates will send them to the prize committee. The prize chairman is Joyce Hoffa Scanlan, and her address is 2324 Bryant Avenue, South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405. Remember that prizes should be worth at least twenty-five dollars and be something the lucky winners can transport without too much difficulty.

The Convention dates are Monday, June 30, through Friday, July 4—and get your reservations in *now*. □

## RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD VENDORS OF AMERICA LEADER RESIGNS

BY

JAMES GASHEL

Although the leaders and officers of the American Council of the Blind would like to have us believe otherwise, the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America is truly a satellite organization whose main purpose seems to be to hoodwink blind vendors into joining the ACB. Unlike the NFB, which makes it clear that persons joining a division must also join the Federation, the ACB has used the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America and other satellite groups as recruiting tools, always being careful not to spell out the fact that members of these groups are also members of ACB. Some blind vendors, computer programmers, and lawyers have expressed shock and surprise to learn that by joining one or another "national association" they have also joined the ACB. Of course, this is a commendable approach if you need to pad the membership to swell the ranks.

Many of us have known that there are Federationists at heart, who have, for one reason or another, allowed themselves to become associated with R-SVA or other ACB fronts. Perhaps many were not fully aware of the connection. Since it is not

likely that we will find the ACB anxious to announce that true-blue Federationists have been among their ranks, I would like to take this occasion to report that Arthur Segal, recently a board member of the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America, has now publicly announced his allegiance to the Federation and his resignation from the R-SVA board.

In fact, Art Segal has been a long-time Federationist in Pennsylvania and has participated actively in NFB Conventions at the national level. Art is also a leader of blind vendors in Pennsylvania. In December 1973, Art delivered eloquent testimony to the Congress in support of the Randolph-Sheppard Act. In announcing his resignation from the Board of Directors of R-SVA, Art Segal pledged his loyalty to the Federation and urged other "dues-paying R-SVA members" to examine their consciences.

This instance causes one to wonder just how many "real members" does R-SVA have? How many are "dues-payers?" And, how many would really step up to the line and be counted? I leave it to you to judge for yourselves.

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## TAKING FROM THE BLIND

BY

MARJORIE BOYD

[Reprinted with permission from the *Washington Post*, August 18, 1974.]

As Government programs go, the one in which blind vendors sell candies and newspapers in Federal office buildings around the country is tiny and inconspicuous. The blind vendors number only several hundred, and the program costs almost nothing because the vendors' little businesses quickly become self-sufficient. So it has been since 1936, when it was decided that since someone was going to get the small concessions, it might as well be those particularly deserving of Government preference.

It is remarkable, then, that blind vendors' livelihoods are now being threatened. The problem is not that the program has been a failure. It is simply that the blind vendors happen to be in the way of the Government employees' attempts to expand their fringe benefits.

The dispute can be traced to the time when vending machine companies first came to call on Federal agencies. When they met with bureaucratic confusion as to who was in charge of this area. Organizations of Government workers called "employee recreation associations" stepped in. They presented themselves to the companies as the rightful recipients of rent from vending machines, stating that the funds would be used for expenses formerly financed by passing the hat: wedding, birthday, and retirement gifts, bowling leagues, parties, picnics. So the vending machine companies negotiated contracts with the recreation associations

and began trucking in banks of gleaming machines. As Government buildings proliferated, the vending machines began to do a multi-million dollar business; the recreation associations became "corporations" and expanded by opening gift shops, vending stands, and even cafeterias.

The recreation associations' actions have no support in either law or custom. They have ignored repeated warnings from the Comptroller General that the practice is illegal, including one unequivocal 1952 statement: "Funds derived from the installation and operation of vending machines on Government-owned or controlled property are required to be deposited into the Treasury of the United States."

The practice, of course, has no precedent in private industry. Vending machine companies always pay rent to the owners of property where they place their machines; they would never dream of disbursing it among, say, the tellers in a bank, the workers in a factory, or the reporters on a newspaper. But where the owners are the U.S. taxpayers, unusual arrangements are possible because few are willing to do battle to protect the owners' rights.

The blind vendors, installed in the buildings by an act of Congress, were the only competition the employee associations faced. And it is interesting that the associations were unwilling to share the

burgeoning market with the blind. Instead, they developed a variety of tactics to remove the competition.

The easiest situation for the employee associations to handle is where a new building is planned. When a giant Post Office building was opened in Houston several years ago, the Postmaster refused to let a single blind person set up shop inside, even though four blind vendors had run stands in the old building for years. This tactic has been used all over the country—at Post Offices in Des Moines, Iowa, and Memphis, Tennessee; in an Internal Revenue Service building in Covington, Kentucky; in Federal office buildings in Arlington, Virginia, and Sacramento, California.

Where a new building is not planned, the employees sometimes try to force out the blind vendor. The preferred method is to rig the competition. For example, coffee is a big item for the blind vendors. Even when they must compete with machines, the blind vendors usually win, since most people prefer coffee brewed in a large urn to the variety that squirts from the machines. To reduce the vendors' edge, the building superintendent can simply forbid the blind man to sell coffee. Similarly, if business at the employee cafeteria flags, the superintendent can ban sandwiches, donuts, and other items from the blind stands. This ploy has put many of the vendors out of business and has made inroads against others. Its recorded successes include a Post Office in San Antonio, an Atomic Energy Commission installation in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a Customs Office in Philadelphia, and a Post Office in Birmingham, Alabama.

If a blind vendor keeps his stand open anyway, trying to earn a living from the

few mints and postcards he can still sell, the employees may turn to a more creative technique. This involves putting vending machines in the more prominent parts of the building and moving the blind vendor to a little-traveled hall or closet. In Baltimore, one stand was moved to a corner on the third floor, and in an Oklahoma City Post Office the vendor was put behind closed doors in a side corridor.

So confident have the employee groups become that their takeovers will go unquestioned that in at least one case an employee organization demanded payments from blind vendors. This happened at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where each of the eleven blind vendors was asked to sign a paper turning over ten percent of his annual income to the employees' recreation association to pay for the upkeep of an elaborate swimming, tennis, and picnic complex the organization had built with its vending machine income. Only after a threatened law suit by one blind vendor and an expose in the local newspaper did the employees retreat.

Many of the employee associations file non-profit corporation tax returns, available to any taxpayer, and they reveal annual incomes of five and six figures and, for a few associations, over one million dollars. As their incomes have grown, so have their activities. Swimming pools, gymnasiums, handball courts, and sauna baths have been built. In addition to birthday, wedding, and baby shower remembrances, many associations present each and every employee with turkeys at Thanksgiving and Christmas. And the standard gold watch at retirement has been replaced by a color television set or an air-conditioning unit. One recreation

association, at the Agriculture Department in Washington, buys a new car each year "for the association's use."

Since the blind vendors were the only ones being seriously hurt and since they were slow to complain, no one noticed what was happening. Finally, in 1969, Democratic Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped, became concerned that the blind vendor program had stopped growing and was even declining. By 1969, when Randolph's subcommittee began looking into the problem, workers in the field of blind rehabilitation estimated that more than seven thousand blind people could enter the program if places could be found, and that over five hundred veterans blinded in the Vietnam war were seeking such employment.

Since 1969, Senator Randolph has been pushing legislation that would get the Government employees out of the vending machine business and save the blind vending program. His first bill passed the Senate on September 28, 1970, and went over to the House. But letters from civil servants poured into congressional offices and swarms of Government workers visited their Congressmen. Because of this intensive lobbying effort, led by the six hundred thousand-member American Postal Workers Union, the bill died a quiet death in subcommittee.

Randolph re-introduced his bill in 1971 and held more hearings, but the House committee sent over word that it "couldn't touch the bill in an election year." So Senator Randolph asked the General Accounting Office to audit all vending operations on Federal property. Lack of

manpower forced the GAO to limit its audit to a representative sample of thirty-eight Federal buildings, 291 Post Offices, and six military bases. Still, its findings indicated the scope of the employee association activities as well as the plight of the blind vendors.

In the thirty-eight Federal buildings, the market was almost equally divided between blind vendors and employee associations. However, civilian Federal buildings account for only 8.2 percent of Federal property; the remaining 91.8 percent is controlled by the Defense Department and the Post Office Department. On the six military bases surveyed by GAO, only four stands were operated by blind vendors while employee associations there grossed a total of \$10.2 million. At the 291 Post Offices, the employee associations were taking in \$2.8 million while six of the ten blind vendors audited were making less than three thousand dollars annually.

With the GAO report in hand, Randolph introduced a new bill and held hearings last November and December. On January 27, Randolph called an executive session to get the bill moving through the Senate. At this meeting, Democratic Senator Walter Mondale of Minnesota and Republican Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania asked that further consideration be given to the Government employees' position. They suggested that the postal workers and other unions might be amenable to a compromise, and Randolph agreed to have his staff sound them out.

It is not surprising that Schweiker and Mondale, compassionate men with records of working for programs to help the blind, should in this case show such concern for the shaky claims of the Government



employees. Schweiker is in an uphill fight for re-election, and Mondale is striving for the support and funds necessary to seek the Democratic presidential nomination.

When the committee staff approached the Government union representatives, they found them in a mellow mood. "We're tired of fighting this bill," one said. "Let's work something out so we can support it."

The union representatives ultimately recommended amendments, many of which were incorporated into the bill. These allowed the employee associations to retain percentages of vending machine income in certain cases. The draft legislation was sent to the union officers with instructions to report back any suggestions before May 31. None was received by that time, and it was assumed the union opposition had dissolved.

Then, on June 4, the day before the committee was to pass the amended bill, the American Postal Workers Union sent a letter to each committee member announcing it would continue to oppose the bill.

Senator Randolph says of the time-consuming negotiations: "Now that I look back, it appears that they wanted a delay. They led us to believe they were sincerely interested in reaching an agreement, and I thought if we could have an agreement the bill would move through the House. I was astonished when they made their abrupt turn-around."

Despite private grousing by Senators about hazards of going against the postal workers, the strength of the blind vendors' position and Randolph's tenacity prevailed and the bill passed the Senate June 20

without a dissenting vote. Observers doubt that any House member would vote against the bill either, but they agree that it will probably never reach the House floor.

"The bill was awfully late getting over from the Senate," says a House staff member. "We have so much going on over here, I just don't think we can get to it before the end of the session. The postal workers' opposition makes it a controversial bill and controversial legislation takes time to work out."

There is no doubt that the American Postal Workers Union has cranked up its machinery against the blind vendor bill in the House. A recent newsletter exhorts: "The continuing battle to defeat or further and substantially amend S. 2581 now shifts to the House of Representatives . . . APWU urges you to immediately initiate an all-out letter writing and personal contact campaign with your Congressman in opposition to the Senate-approved S. 2581."

Another newsletter from the postal union provides these helpful lobbying hints:

The legislative committee members, particularly the chairman, should have a first-name speaking acquaintance with all Members of the Congress who serve in his district as well as those in districts that encompass the area represented by the local.

. . . invite a Member of Congress to address a meeting of postal employees. The legislative committee or a representative of the committee should try to meet with the Congressman or Senator each time they are in the district. Even if you have no specific request to make of him, there is nothing wrong with stopping by for a friendly hello. Let them know you don't come to see them only when you have a problem!

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Several Congressmen and their aides talked of "not crossing" the postal workers, and perhaps they are politically wise to be wary: The postal workers are in every congressional district, and often are the most vocal and organized group there. The union newsletter ominously lists the names of the five Senators who spoke in favor of the blind on the day Randolph's bill passed the Senate.

Not every Government employee union has opposed the blind vendor bill. The union at the Treasury Department, for example, has broken with the others on the measure. The union president of Treasury, Vincent Connery, appeared at the Senate

hearings with strong words of condemnation for his colleagues:

What we cannot countenance are the activities of the Federal and postal employee welfare organizations which, because of their greed, have seriously hampered the blind in their efforts to secure gainful employment. We find it unconscionable that any union or group of Federal or postal employees would deny the blind the opportunity to earn a decent living simply to provide themselves with such frivolities as turkeys, gifts, and trophies.

But the Government workers arrayed against the bill have persevered. For five years now, Senator Randolph has been trying to protect the blind vendors' modest livelihoods. But from all indications the bill will die again this year in the House. □

#### OPEN LETTER TO FEDERATIONISTS

DEAR COLLEAGUES: It has been quite some time since I have published a general roundup type of letter in *The Monitor* to bring you up to date on Federation happenings. It is Sunday afternoon, October 6, and I am riding across the Iowa countryside with two hours before I get to Des Moines, so it seems a good time to do it.

I am returning from New York City, where I participated in ceremonies commemorating Dr. Jacob Freid's twenty-five years of service as Director of the Jewish Braille Institute of America. In the name of the Federation, I presented to Dr. Freid a distinguished service award and served as keynote speaker. Dr. Freid richly merits our commendations, for he has never failed to stand with us in our battle for the rights of the blind.

Mr. Cylke, Chief of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the

Library of Congress, was present and spoke. We had an opportunity for a brief conversation before the program began. Rita Chernow, president of our New York City Chapter, also spoke. So did Rami Rabby, who is not only a staunch Federationist but also a member of the board of directors of the Jewish Braille Institute of America. I might say here that Rami was elected to the executive committee of the International Federation of the Blind at its recent convention in Berlin and that Dr. Isabelle Grant was elected third vice-president. I returned by train to Chicago this morning, where Mrs. Omvig (my secretary) met me so that we could work on mail while driving to Des Moines. Incidentally, there were a few flakes of snow in Chicago this morning, and there was light rain much of the way to the Iowa border; but as we crossed the Mississippi, the sun began to shine magnificently—a good omen, I hope.

The response to the aids and appliance article in the August *Braille Monitor* has been overwhelming—more than you would believe. The orders have poured in by the hundreds. Many of us have thought for a long time that present sources of aids and appliances for the blind were inadequate and that something should be done about it, but I would never have imagined that the pent-up demand and frustration were so great. Letter after letter has expressed pleasure that the Federation is going to be handling aids and devices and that the blind can now order from their own organization.

The net result is that we were vastly under-supplied and that we have been almost completely cleaned out of everything except the new NFB canes. Until further notice, please do not send any more orders for aids or appliances. This does not apply to the NFB cane, which you may continue to order.

We have to have time to regroup and resupply. Since the market is much bigger than we thought it could possible be, we will plan accordingly. When we are ready to take orders again, we will try to have enough supplies on hand to fill requests promptly and fully.

In a future issue of *The Monitor* we will again list—in detail—what we have, and the prices. See the August *Monitor* for a description of the NFB cane. When ordering the NFB cane, please be sure to specify length. Available lengths are: 48", 50", 52", 54", 56", 58", 60", and 62". The most popular lengths are 54" and 56". For each cane send six dollars. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the National Federation of the Blind. Allow four weeks for delivery. We will fill orders more quickly if we can.

One more thing about aids and appliances: inflation continues. Therefore, when we have restocked and are ready to accept more orders, prices of many things will undoubtedly be higher. We will issue an entire new price list and description, and we will keep the costs as low as we can.

Speaking of inflation and money, I hope most of you have been hearing the recent Presidential Releases on cassette. They are being sent to our state and chapter presidents, and they should have been making them available to you. I have been calling attention to the urgent budgetary problems the Federation is facing.

A number of things have combined to cause us trouble: In the first place, the economy of the country is such that fundraising has been down for almost all organizations. In the second place, there is every reason to believe that some of our NAC friends have been trying to counterattack by attempting to cause us trouble in our fundraising. A number of states and cities have passed laws and ordinances requiring registration by any organization that wishes to raise funds, and some of these laws and ordinances seem deliberately aimed at mail campaigns. There is a real question as to whether a state or city can regulate the U.S. mails. We have always held that they cannot and have never had much trouble about it.

Now, all of a sudden, simultaneous attacks have been launched upon us from a number of states and localities. Some of the circumstances seem very suspicious—which is why I mentioned our friends at NAC. Consider Pennsylvania: In the spring we received a garden variety, form letter from the Charitable Solicitations Commission of that State

asking us to register. In June we received another letter telling us they would have us in court in a week. There were no negotiations, and no real attempts to see whether the law applied. When I called the Charitable Solicitations people, they said that a sheltered workshop agency in the State (some of the branches of which are NAC accredited) had complained.

Through the summer we tried to negotiate with the Pennsylvania officials to see whether they were really trying to get us to register in good faith or whether we were simply dealing with harassment and an attempt to hurt our organization. The Pennsylvania law says that costs of merchandise may be deducted in considering the total cost of fundraising and that not more than thirty-five percent of each dollar raised may be spent for fundraising costs. Thus, the Girl Scouts may buy cookies for fifty cents or sixty cents per box and sell them for a dollar and still be all right. They are permitted to deduct the cost of the cookies and not report it at all. However, the Pennsylvania officials told us that we could not deduct the costs of our neckties or greeting cards.

Ned and Helen Graham, a number of Pennsylvanians (including Mae Davidow), and I went to the Pennsylvania Secretary of State's office early in August. She told us that the law was not meant to cause problems to organizations like ours. She said that her own father was blind and that she knew of the good work of the Federation. We worked out an agreement with the head of the Charitable Solicitations Commission, who is in the Secretary of State's office. This was on Friday, August 9. The following Tuesday (without any prior warning and in violation of the agreements reached the preceding

Friday) we were told that we would be taken to court the following day. This was done, and there was press coverage in Pennsylvania.

By coincidence, the story was also wired to Iowa. We have now learned that Pennsylvania officials have written to other states. We are studying the documentation to see whether legal action can be brought personally against the Pennsylvania officials. We are also giving serious consideration to bringing suit against the sheltered workshop agency in Pennsylvania which allegedly made the original complaint.

As to Pennsylvania, although we wish to be cooperative with state and local officials, our position is the same as it has always been, and it has stood the legal tests of time. No state or local government can regulate the United States mails. Congress does that. We are abiding by the postal laws—and all other properly constituted laws for that matter. Anyone who wishes to contend otherwise should be prepared to defend himself in the courts and in the arena of social action and political opinion.

In the meantime, it is not difficult to understand why I say that some of these circumstances look suspiciously like a concerted attack. Of course, it does not have to be NAC. There are a number of agencies that would be glad to hurt the organized blind movement if they thought they could. Of course, we are not helpless in the face of such attacks, as past experience has shown. We have pickets and publicity and political activism, and we also have contacts and influence of our own. Further, we (unlike some of our opponents) have not grown soft or lost our will to fight. Whoever wants war will likely

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get as good as he gives—perhaps, even more than he gives.

This brings me back to financing. Many of us have given when asked (sometimes quite generously), but we have never made a practice of regular, systematic giving to support the National Office of the Federation. The time has now come for individual soul searching and examining of conscience. What does this movement mean to you as a Federationist? What does it mean to me? We have organized and stood forth to meet the established power of some of the most reactionary agencies in this country. We have exposed their weaknesses and fought for reform and change. We have said that we are a movement, that we can stand on our own feet, and that we will no longer tolerate second-class citizenship. Not only we who are blind have said these things, but they have been said by our sighted friends and allies as well. We should not now be surprised at counterattacks and dirty and unprincipled methods. The only surprise is that they have not come sooner and harder. We are emerging as first-class citizens, and we must expect the custodians to fight to keep us down—and to fight with desperation and meanness.

Every Federationist and every friend of the Federation must help financially—and not just once but regularly, and not just in token amounts but meaningfully. This is our movement, and we must be willing to sacrifice for it. Some of us can give \$40 or \$50 per month; some can give \$20 or \$25; some can give \$10; some can give \$5; some can give a dollar; and some may only be able to afford a quarter. The important thing is that each one of us search his own soul to see what the movement means to him and what his resources will permit.

There should be no pressuring, and the small gift should be given and received as proudly as the biggest—if it, indeed, represents sacrifice and all that can be afforded.

The contributions from the blind are beginning to come in, and I have no doubt that we will meet the challenge. There is no force strong enough to stop our movement. Those who think otherwise are invited to watch and see. We have fought too hard and come too far to go back.

Remember that it costs around \$12 per year for each subscription to *The Monitor*; that the Presidential Releases on cassette cost something like \$7,000 per year. Our radio and television spots, which now cover the Nation, have cost tens of thousands of dollars. It costs money to operate our Washington and Des Moines and Berkeley offices. It costs money for our committees and divisions. It also costs to organize states and strengthen existing affiliates, and there is great cost in the quantities of literature and records and films we have produced. It has also cost countless hours of hard work and dedicated effort. But it has been worth it (worth every bit of it), and it will continue, for we will make it continue. We know who we are and what we must do, and there are now enough of us on the barricades to do the job—and more of us are coming every day.

I have gone into this much detail so that you will be fully informed. One of our biggest strengths is our openness. Let me turn now to a few other things.

By the time you get this letter we should have an affiliate in Vermont. A team of Federationists led by Shirley Lebowitz is now in the State working. I have complete

faith that they will be successful. This leaves only Wisconsin and South Dakota. Organizing teams will enter those States soon.

I conclude this letter by saying to you that (as usual) our movement is growing stronger every day and faced by a multitude of problems. In other words, everything is normal. As you know, we thrive on problems. Otherwise, we would long since have been done in. Also, there

would probably have been no need for the organization in the first place. The past year has been the greatest in our history. Join me on the barricades, and we will make the next one even better.

Cordially,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President,*  
*National Federation of the Blind.*

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### WE GOT IT TOGETHER

BY

ROBERT ESCHBACH

On September 3, 1974, the Dayton (Ohio) *Daily News* announced the following information: that Phil Sokela, area supervisor, was being transferred to the Cleveland office to become assistant area supervisor under Joe Sullivan; that Morris Bush, rehabilitation supervisor, was being transferred to the district office in Portsmouth.

To the casual reader, the above items might seem only a normal process in the routine of a state bureaucratic system. To the blind of the area it was a decisive change—something that no one supposed could have happened six months ago.

It all began last spring when a reporter from the Dayton *Daily News*, Don Stewart, was taking his usual assigned responsibility of covering the "Action Line." A letter was received that day indicating that a blind student at Wright State University was having some difficulty in finding a summer job in the Dayton area. After talking to the young person in question and discussing the issue with the local office of the Bureau

of Services for the Blind, Mr. Stewart came up with the following disturbing information: (1) Since the young person was a client of the Cleveland office of the Bureau of Services for the Blind, the local office did not have any responsibility in helping him find a summer job in this area; (2) If the young person were willing to transfer his caseload to the Dayton office, they would be glad to help him find a job; (3) Upon examining the possibility of transfer to the Dayton office, the young man discovered that the Cleveland office would only transfer him if he had a job.

The confusion of Mr. Stewart and the obvious bureaucratic buck-passing that was being used made him wonder if there were other instances of this kind of service. After digging into the newspaper files and finding a number of blind people in the area whom he might contact, he began to make calls and ask questions. Initially, he discovered people were reluctant to talk for fear that, should their names be known, there might be some recrimination by a

counselor or other staff members of the local office.

Finally, Mr. Stewart came to the Dayton Council of the Blind, the local affiliate of National Federation of the Blind of Ohio. He asked if there were members of this organization who would be willing to tell him what really was happening with the local office of the Bureau of Services for the Blind. A number of people volunteered to discuss the issues with Mr. Stewart. They also suggested that he could use their names, take pictures, share what he learned. As a result of the information gathered through the Dayton Council of the Blind and subsequent leads given to Mr. Stewart by members of the DCB, a series of five articles was published in the Dayton *Daily News* in June of this year.

The articles featured a number of fine people and described their problems in dealing with the local office of BSB. They shared statistics about the local office operation in relation to the entire State. They quoted other blind people, as well as the director of the Bureau of Services for the Blind and staff members of the local office. Comments about poor referrals, poor follow-up, condescension, lack of opportunities, along with the statistical data which confirmed all of the above, was presented on the front page of the Dayton *Daily News* for five straight days. Phil Sokela, area supervisor, made the comment that "it's not a very comfortable feeling to replace Richard Nixon on the front page of the newspaper every day for five days."

The articles were topped by a star witness for the Bureau of Services for the Blind. When Don Stewart had gone to the local office to ask if there were any people who could speak in favor of the services, they

pointed to Tom Reynolds, the young graduate student currently working for the summer at General Electric in Schenectady, New York. Mr. Stewart called Tom to talk about the kind of services he had received through the bureau. Tom's story was classically the same as all of the others. He even had to fight to get into college at Ohio State University. After graduating in engineering, there were no promises of jobs from the bureau; he found the job in Schenectady on his own. He has since applied for and received a fellowship at Stanford University for independent graduate studies. The counselor failed to contact him more than once a year. Other than saying that they had given him tuition and supplies for his college education, Tom had no favorable comments about the bureau.

Following the introduction of these articles, the Rehabilitation Services Commission of Ohio, the commission which directs all rehabilitation services in the State, instituted an administrative review of the local office of the Bureau of Services for the Blind.

Editorials in the Dayton *Daily News* were a stinging counterpoint to the reasonable, well-researched articles. They called for the outright dismissal of Phil Sokela and Morris Bush and insisted that the services available for the blind people in this area must be improved.

In the middle of July, the Dayton Council of the Blind called a meeting of people to discuss the issues involved in the articles printed. Many of the people who had described their plights to Don Stewart were present at this meeting. It is important to note that Doris Barkum, the director of Services for the Blind, and

Melvin Klein, commissioner for the Rehabilitation Services Commission, were present at this meeting. The Dayton Council of the Blind maintained the posture throughout the whole experience of trying to deal with the issues of better services for the blind. While there was much evidence pointing to the lack of effective leadership in Phil Sokela and Morris Bush, our concern was to see how we could support the local office in improving its services through better coordination.

The headlines in the September 3rd Dayton *Daily News* culminated the summer's activities.

At the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio's State convention on October 19, 1974, Don Stewart and the Dayton *Daily News* were given a citation for the meritorious work they have done on behalf of the blind in the State of Ohio.

In reflecting on the events, now that they are over, several important factors seem to have emerged. For years the blind have been concerned about the poor services available to them in this area. While they have spoken to each other, and, on occasion, to some officials in the Bureau of Services for the Blind, no action has been taken to strengthen the standards by which the services are given.

Fortunately for the blind, a concerned newspaper reporter happened to be assigned when a letter of complaint came in. Not only was this man concerned, but he was thoughtful in his research and his effort to try to present a fair story. The resulting publicity created the background for administrative review which was long overdue and a change in the structure of the local office of BSB.

It is unfortunate that publicity brought by a newspaper is the only way that services can be improved in the State of Ohio. It is unfortunate that blind people have expressed fear about not being able to tell their stories until recently.

The other significant factor is that those who were able to tell their stories and speak to the truth of the issues were primarily those involved in the organized blind movement. They were not afraid to have their names used and to have their opinions expressed in newsprint because they knew they were a part of an organization that would not allow recrimination to come upon them. We were able to do what has not been done previously. Because we met and worked hard together with Don Stewart and the Dayton *Daily News*; because we were a group of people committed to the idea that as blind persons we have a right to speak freely; because we are together, we did it *together*.

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## AS THIS FEDERATIONIST SEES IT

BY

DICK PARKER

*Editor's Note.—Dick Parker is the immediate past president of the NFB of Nebraska. Mr. Parker was compelled to resign because of recent and severe heart attacks.*

On a Friday night in January of 1971, I got undoubtedly the most important call of my life. It wasn't from the President of the United States, nor was it from the Governor. No, it wasn't even from an attorney telling me I had inherited a million dollars. Instead, it was from Mrs. Mary Ellen Anderson, who was then head of the team of organizers with the National Federation of the Blind. She explained to me that she and others were in Nebraska to reorganize the affiliate of the NFB to make it a statewide organization. She further explained to me, briefly, the philosophy of the Federation, and offered me the opportunity to join an organization whose members chose to speak for themselves, rather than to have others speak for them.

The next day Mrs. Anderson brought me a whole armload of material on and about the National Federation of the Blind. I didn't have to do much reading to realize that the National Federation of the Blind was indeed the most positive-thinking, action-oriented organization of the blind, then, as it is today.

In the three and one-half years that have come and gone since then, much has happened to me personally. Much has happened to the blind of Nebraska. Indeed, much has happened to the blind of our Nation to make me realize how great an

organization it is and how proud I am to be a part.

I am sure you are all familiar with the *Weckerly* case or the *Glen Fishbeck* case, just to give two examples of the need for the NFB. There have been numerous battles waged, the vast majority of which we have won.

Here in Nebraska we have suffered casualties, had setbacks, indeed, lost some battles—as I would imagine you have in your own state. But all things being equal, the Federation has gained one thousand percent for every one percent we have lost. We have passed the Model White Cane bill, we have passed a Fair Employment Practices Act, and we now have a Federationist as our director of State Services for the Visually Impaired. We have made friends in the Governor's office, along with the State Unicameral. We've passed out many brochures, including "What is the NFB"; worked hard on our public service announcements; influenced many people and educated many people to the fact that blindness is a limitation and nothing more.

All of this is well and good, but I ask you now to ask yourself, as I have asked myself: "Have I done all that I could to really stand on the barricades with President Jernigan? Have I written all the letters that needed to be written? Have I contacted all my Congressmen and Senators to let them know of the destructive organization known as NAC and how it is hurting blind people? Have I

written to introduce Jim and Arlene Gashel as our Washington Representatives? Have I supported the local, state, and National NFB offices all that I could?" I say for myself, in many of these areas I fall short.

To any Federationist that may read these words I urge—no, stronger than that—I say to you: When you think you have taken every step you can possibly take and can go no further—take just one more step. When you have written all the letters you think you can write—then write just one more. When you have given all the financial support to the National Office you think you can give—give just one more dollar. We cannot and must never leave everything up to our National President, to our state presidents, or our local presidents. This is as much your organization and my organization as it is President Jernigan's.

To those who read these words who aren't Federationists, I say to you: *Join the Federation!* For, admit it to yourself or not, the Federation is the voice of the organized blind. And it is speaking for you, as well as it is for those of us who are Federationists.

The future for the blind has never looked brighter. The future for the Federation has never looked brighter. But as long as there is one more barricade to overcome, then it is your job and mine to see that that barricade is overcome. It is our job to support our National as well as our state and local offices in every way possible.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in a famous speech once said, "I had a dream." I, too, say I had a dream. That dream is being

fulfilled through the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind, the greatest people's movement, in my estimation, man will ever know. How could anyone help but bubble over with enthusiasm and have his chest swell with pride when he says, "I am a member of the National Federation of the Blind."

President Jernigan has said, "We must eat an elephant one bite at a time." So I ask you now, let us reconfirm our commitment and redouble our efforts so that we might help him to devour the whole elephant just a little bit faster.

The future is ours. Let us not slacken our pace but, indeed, let us reach out for the moon. For it is within our grasp. All we need to achieve, whatever goal we set for ourselves, is persistence, self-determination, and a belief in our own confidence—in other words, the very fundamentals the Federation was founded upon.

This is the first time in some three and one-half years that I have not spoken as a State president or even as a local officer, but simply as a member of the NFB. Some five coronaries have come and gone, and the doctor says I must slow down. But you can be assured, when the need arises, I will be in New York come December to demonstrate against NAC. I will be in the Unicameral this next January to work for passage of needed legislation we plan to introduce. And I'll be working even harder trying to educate the general public. For I am proud to say I'm of the Federation. And if I were to die tomorrow, I would be on the barricades in spirit. □

## EDLUND HAS EXCITING CAREER

[From *Hardware & Farm Equipment*, August 1974. Published under the heading "Edlund Has Exciting Retailing and Volunteer Careers Despite Blindness."]

"Blindness is a nuisance but not a calamity." Nice words, but how many people believe them? Hasn't the average person been taught all of his life that loss of sight is the ultimate tragedy?

"Some people are lefthanded—others are bald—I am blind." These words give an insight into the philosophy, success, and purpose of Richard L. Edlund, owner with his wife, Eileen, of Edlund's Hardware Store at 7146 Kaw Drive, Kansas City, Kansas. Dick Edlund not only believes a blind person can do anything he wants to except drive a car, fly an airplane, or perform brain surgery ("I'm not absolutely certain about the brain surgery," he jokes, "but I wouldn't recommend it"), he has pretty well proved it in his own life.

He now spends roughly two thousand hours a year helping other blind persons as the volunteer Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind and president of that organization's Kansas branch, the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas. "Philosophy is the biggest hill we have to climb," he says, "but once a person can accept blindness as only a physical nuisance, we can help him develop techniques for doing whatever it is he aspires to."

In 1939, when he was only 14, Dick was blinded by an explosion of dynamite caps. He was not sent to a school for the blind nor treated in any way as if he were different from other children. A school for the blind would have been beneficial, he

feels now, for it would have made the remainder of his education easier. As it was, he passed a high school equivalency test and attended Donnelly College for two years. He used recorded text books for study. (He has since taught himself Braille.)

Dick did not have to face the overprotection that handicaps many blind persons. His friends continued asking him to go fishing and join in other activities, and his parents gave him the freedom to make whatever mistakes necessary to the process of re-orienting himself. "I ended up with some badly banged shins but I *learned*, and I'll always be grateful for the opportunity."

He started a building materials business, which he ran for two and one-half years before buying the hardware store in 1947. In addition to handling a large industrial trade, he specialized (and still does) in all types of small repairs. He taught himself lawn mower repair and obtained franchises for Clinton, Lawn Boy, and Briggs and Stratton engines.

He tells an amusing story about those early days in the store. As he was overhauling a lawn mower engine, a Kansas State counselor for the blind came in to see him. The counselor suggested that Dick go to Topeka for evaluation and to see if he "could be trained to do something." Since it was obvious he was then "doing something" with the engine, Dick could hardly believe his ears, so he thought he'd have some fun with the man. "Do you

suppose they could teach me weaving?" he asked. "Oh, yes," came the reply, "blind people can often be taught to do beautiful weaving."

"How about law? I've always wanted to be a lawyer." Dick was not joking now, for he had hoped to study law. The counselor solemnly assured him that that was impossible, purely a hopeless dream. "I didn't argue with him because he told me he had a master's degree," Dick says, "but I've since met at least fifty blind lawyers through the NFB. I really should have done something about that fellow. He later went back to college, got his Ph.D., and now has a high level job with HEW!"

The sort of custodial and negative approach that counselor represented is resented and fought by the National Federation of the Blind. The Federation seeks to educate government agencies and the public to the fact that the blind are normal individuals who can compete on terms of equality with others. In Kansas, for example, reform is needed, according to Edlund. The State agency dealing with the blind is a subdivision of the Social and Rehabilitation Services Commission, which Edlund considers an "umbrella" agency encompassing far too many problems that are related only remotely, if at all. He has been working hard for a separate blind commission and such a proposal will be introduced in the next session of the legislature.

It's impossible to talk to Edlund without a feeling of excitement. He is a man who obviously finds both his business and his volunteer work highly satisfying and challenging. While H&FE's editor was there, Eileen waited on most of the trade while Dick talked of hopes and dreams for

improving the lot of the blind in a sight-oriented world, though he excused himself several times to carry sacks of feed and other heavy articles to waiting cars.

He had a greeting for each customer and one commented that it appeared that he was being interviewed for "more publicity." Edlund has never been a shrinking violet, and his customers know it. For years he has been involved in civil rights causes, politics, civic organizations, scouting, and the Seventh Step Foundation. Since becoming active in the NFB in 1969, the sheer weight of its demands has caused him to devote less time to other endeavors, though he currently is a candidate for the nomination of the Democratic party for Wyandotte County public administrator.

Some of the customers don't know Dick is blind—a situation that has caused a problem only once that the Edlunds can recall. Eileen came into the store from the shop behind the display floor one day to see a man talking in sign language while Dick repeatedly said, "May I help you?" All three got a big laugh out of learning that communication between a blind man and a deaf mute takes some interpretation by a sighted woman!

Business was better, Dick explains, before the highway was moved a few years ago, leaving Edlund's store somewhat stranded on a two-block-long street. The volume is still satisfactory, and the less-frenzied pace is actually welcome. It gives the Edlunds a chance to get away each year for the week-long Convention of the National Federation of the Blind, held this year during the first week of July in Chicago. Attended by 2,200 of the Federation's fifty thousand members, it was the

Convention that put Dick in the national post of Treasurer. Because he will be responsible for all NFB funds, he anticipates hiring a bookkeeper to handle details. Ironically, he says bookkeeping is the only task in the hardware store that he can't handle.

The NFB, he makes clear, is a volunteer organization with a paid staff of only eight nationwide. Its overall purpose is the complete integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality. This objective involves the removal of legal, economic, and social discriminations; the education of the public to new concepts concerning blindness; and the achievement by each and every blind person of the right to exercise to the fullest his individual talents and capacities.

Dick is part missionary and part crusader. He contacts newly blinded persons or those in need of bolstering and offers them the fellowship, philosophy, and instruction available through the NFB. In his crusading capacity, he is a real fighter if need be. A recent example is a strike by blind workers at the State-sponsored Kansas Industries

for the Blind Workshop. Blind workers are receiving forty cents an hour less than sighted workers doing the same jobs, so Edlund says, and he found such discrimination as offensive as the workers did, so he is helping them with the backing of the NFB. Negotiations have been scheduled, and he hopes for a settlement within a week or so.

His faith in correcting wrongs through the democratic process is strong, and he had many successes to show for six years of work in the State legislature in Topeka. One of his most unusual victories was convincing the State of Kansas to issue drivers' licenses to blind persons. It sounds silly to the sighted person, until he recalls how often he is asked for his driver's license for identification. The Kansas license for the blind is stamped with the notation: "For identification purposes only."

None of it seems too unusual to Dick Edlund. After all, he says, he built his own house and "smashed my thumbs just as thoroughly as anybody that can see." □



## SPECIAL SERVICE FOR THE BLIND: HAWAII

BY

MICHAEL HINGSON

During the past year, there has been a sharp increase in the number of colleges which provide special services and programs for their handicapped students. As a result, many workshops and conferences have been held in order to educate college personnel concerning the services their programs should provide. Unfortunately, all too often, the consumer of these services is not consulted. College program staff members attend these workshops and return with poor attitudes concerning the students they serve. Many useless services are offered to the college student. In some cases he is required to use them even though they may not be in his best interest.

An example of a program which provides many unneeded, and even detrimental services to its blind college student clientele is the Kokua program at the University of Hawaii. The people who run the program say that it is set up in such a way that it will teach independence to blind students attending the University of Hawaii. In fact, the program does just the opposite.

Several years ago the Kokua program published a set of guidelines describing the various rules under which the University of Hawaii blind students use the services offered. Read the guidelines for yourself and determine how useful the Kokua program is. We who are blind do not need many services which so-called handicapped student services programs offer. There are constructive ways in which money can be used to help those of us in college, and we are always interested in sharing them with anyone who is willing to listen.

### Guidelines for the Provision of Services to University Students

#### I. *Vocational Rehabilitation Act—Regulations*

- A. The Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1965, § 11(a), authorizes state vocational rehabilitation agencies to use available Federal grant-to-states funds to furnish reader services for blind clients.
- B. The State plan shall set forth the policies that the State agency will follow in furnishing training to eligible individuals to the extent necessary to achieve their vocational rehabilitation. The State plan shall also include the State agency's policies with respect to the provision of books and training materials.

#### II. *Guidelines for Use of Reader and Tutorial Services*

- A. The State of Hawaii will provide reader and tutorial services without conditioning them on an economic means test. However, there will be a review of the individual's economic situation for the purpose of assisting him to contribute toward his own vocational rehabilitation to the extent practicable.
- B. Any individual receiving vocational rehabilitation services



may obtain assistance with reader and tutorial services to the extent that such services will enable him to accomplish his training and employment.

- C. Individuals attending intermediate and high schools will receive services through the Department of Education and the University of Hawaii Kokua Office.

- D. All students in the University system are to clear through the University of Hawaii Kokua Office for reader and tutorial services which will be financed by vocational rehabilitation funds. For unusual circumstances where service is not available through Kokua, students should arrange for special readers or tutors on an individual basis through their counselor.

- E. As much as possible, early registration should be planned so that textbooks may be made available to Kokua for early taping or transcribed books can be ordered through appropriate sources. If the student chooses not to take advantage of early registration or has failed to comply with the University registration procedures, Vocational Rehabilitation will not be responsible for those extraordinary reader services resulting from poor planning.

- F. When taped materials are available, the student is expected to use them. Live readers may be

provided in special circumstances after the student clears with Kokua staff or his Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. Vocational Rehabilitation will not pay for live readers or taped materials not authorized either by Kokua or by the student's counselor.

- G. Tutors will be provided according to the student's needs, and need will be determined by Kokua staff and/or the counselor.

- H. Readers and tutors are to indicate on their time reports the names of students, materials read, and number of hours spent. Students will countersign verifying that reports are correct.

- I. The State Library for the the Blind will be utilized to prevent unnecessary duplicating of available taped material.

### III. *Guidelines for Purchases of Books and Supplies*

- A. The State plan states that tools, equipment, books, and supplies, and all other training materials which are necessary and required by individuals to carry out the training program will be provided.

- B. The agency shall hold residual title to books, equipment, and supplies except consumable supplies and outdated material furnished an eligible client, thus permitting the agency to reclaim

such items in the event the client dies or changes his vocational plan or has no further use for them. Disposition of such by the client must have prior agency approval.

- C. The criteria to be used to determine books, supplies, and training materials which are necessary and required are as follows:
1. Books, supplies, and training materials published by the training institution as required and necessary by the institution for training and for a particular program in course.
  2. Institutions which follow a practice of having the instructor specify what is necessary and required, the requirement is applicable to all students in the same program.
- D. Exceptions to the Above Criteria
1. The client's handicap necessitates the provision of

special types or amounts of training materials, books, and supplies over and above that required by the institution or instructor in order to enable the client to benefit fully as the non-handicapped from the training.

2. The amount, type, and numbers of items considered for exception shall include consideration of all alternatives and substitutes of lesser cost.
- E. To avoid duplication of book purchases among students who are using taped books, Kokua staff will make the purchases directly through the University of Hawaii bookstore. Students requiring the use of both taped and print books should clear with Kokua staff before purchasing books from the bookstore. Kokua Office will serve as liaison between agency and student in determining special needs or exceptions to agency policy. □
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## NFB STATE AFFILIATE PUBLICATIONS

*Editor's Note.—If an affiliate publication has been omitted, if the editor is different than the one listed, if other corrections are needed, please let the Monitor editors know. If your publication is among the missing, are the Monitor editors on your mailing list?*

The Alabama Bulletin Board [monthly]

Published by the NFB of Alabama

Editor: T. Euclid Rains, Sr.

Route 1, Box 326

Albertville, AL 35950

The Blind Californian [quarterly]

Published by the NFB of California

Editor: Lawrence Marcelino

3315 Cabrillo

San Francisco, CA 94121

News and Views [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Colorado

Editor: Marge Gallien

915 N. Yuma No. 101

Colorado Springs, CO 80909

The Connecticut Blind Federationist [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Connecticut

Editors: Ben Snow and Mary Brunoli

PO Box 6433, Station A

Hartford, CT 06106

The D.C. Interchange [quarterly]

Published by the NFB of the District of Columbia

Editor: Jim Doherty

9301 Singleton Drive

Bethesda, MD 20034

NFBG Journal [bi-monthly]

Published by the NFB of Georgia

Editor: Anderson Frazer

2616 Warm Springs Road

Columbus, GA 31904

## Gem State Blind [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Idaho

Editor: H. Barton

616 Warner Avenue, No. 27

Lewiston, ID 83501

## The Month's News [monthly]

Published by the NFB of Illinois

Editor: Rami Rabby

535 North Michigan Avenue, Apt. 304

Chicago, IL 60611

## NFB of Iowa Bulletin [quarterly]

Published by the NFB of Iowa

Editor: Jan Decker

906 Lyon Street, Apt 7

Des Moines, IA 50316

## Newsletter [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Kansas

Editor: Walter Long

NFB of Kansas

7061 Riverview

Kansas City, KS 66112

## Newsletter [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Louisiana

Communications: Harvey Webb, President

NFB of Louisiana

PO Box 351

Morgan City, LA 70380

## Cassette Gazette [quarterly]

Published by the NFB of Massachusetts

Editor: Mrs. Bernice Hamer

31 Dartmouth Street

Lawrence, MA 01841

## The Michigan Focus [quarterly]

Published by the NFB of Michigan

Editor: Allen Harris

12673 Mettetal

Detroit, MI 48227

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Minnesota Bulletin [bi-monthly]

Published by the NFB of Minnesota

Editors: Joyce (Hoffa) and Tom Scanlan  
1605 Eustis Street  
St. Paul, MN 55108

UB Hilites

Published by the United Blind of Minnesota

Editor: Carl Kuhl, President  
4421 Fourth Street NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55421

Newsletter [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Mississippi

Communications: E. U. Parker, President  
NFB of Mississippi  
PO Box 2673  
Laurel, MS 39440

The Blind Missourian [semi-annual]

Published by the NFB of Missouri

Editors: Gwen Rittgers, Margaret Bohley, Irene Wyatt  
Communications: John Dower, President  
NFB of Missouri  
4157 Parker Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63116

The Observer [monthly]

Published by the Montana Association for the Blind

Editor: (Mrs.) Lelia M. Proctor  
PO Box 536  
Kalispell, MT 59901

The Blind Nevadian [random publication]

Published by the NFB of Nevada

Editor: John Tait  
1001 N. Bruce Street  
Las Vegas, NV 89101

New Jersey Council Chronicle [quarterly]

Published by the New Jersey Council of the Blind

Editor: George E. Burck  
27 Burlington Avenue  
Leonardo, NJ 07737

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## Newsletter [monthly]

Published by the NFB of North Carolina

Communications: Mrs. Robert M. Staley, President  
NFB of North Carolina  
5310 Farm Pond Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28212

## Ohio Newsletter [bi-monthly]

Published by the NFB of Ohio

Editor: Stanley Doran  
176 Brehl Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43223

## SAM [bi-monthly]

Published by the NFB of Oregon

Editor: Winona Parker, President  
439 Terrace  
Ashland, OR 97520

## We, The Blind [quarterly]

Published by the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind

Editor: Dorothy Digirolamo  
6217 Lebanon Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19151

## The Palmetto Auroran

Published by the South Carolina Aurora Clubs

Editor: Donald C. Capps  
1829 Belmont Drive  
Columbia, SC 29206

## Newsletter

Published by the NFB of Virginia

Editor: Walt Weber  
483 Westover Hills Blvd., Apt. 203  
Richmond, VA 23225

## NFBW Newslne

Published by the NFB of Washington

PO Box 12563  
Seattle, WA 98111

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## NEVADA CONVENTION

A group of determined Federationists met in Las Vegas, Nevada, for the annual convention of the NFB of Nevada on October 5 and 6.

Roger Trounday, director of the Department of Human Resources of the State, remained the entire first day of the convention and stayed for the banquet. Mr. Trounday pointed out that Nevada was the fifth highest State in the supplementation of the SSI grant for blind persons. He said the State administration is requesting the legislature to increase aid to the blind from the present \$215 a month to \$240 for the next fiscal year, then to \$265 for the following year. The State also hopes to increase social services, but he pointed out that increased accountability for results in this area would be necessary.

Bennie Parrish, planning specialist on the staff of the Regional Office of the Social Security Administration, discussed the work of his office, especially as it relates to SSI. He spoke of progress being made in controversial interpretations and confirmed that blind persons who were sixty-five years of age and older could apply for aid to the blind rather than being compelled to apply as aged persons. Mr. Parrish is himself blind.

Mrs. Pat Van Betten of the Consumer's League of Nevada recounted gains in her field of interest during the past year—the creation of a State Office of Consumer Affairs in Nevada, the establishment of an Unfair Practices Act by the legislature, and a three-day “cooling off” period during which a person who purchases an article

has three working days after signing a contract to change his mind.

Perry Sundquist, representing the National Office of the NFB, discussed pending national legislation—our Disability Insurance for the Blind bill, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments, the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments, and our work on securing an escalator clause for the SSI program. He also touched upon our efforts to secure administrative relief in some areas of the SSI program—notably a liberalization of the time limits on a plan for self-support and liberalization of the amount an ineligible spouse can retain for his or her own support before allocating the balance of the earnings to the SSI recipient.

Almost one hundred persons attended the gala banquet, so ably presided over by that venerable leader of the blind in Nevada, K. O. Knudson. Perry Sundquist gave the address entitled “The Goals of the NFB.”

On Sunday morning Dr. Maurice Pearlman, a distinguished Las Vegas ophthalmologist, talked about recent happenings in the scientific field in eye research and treatment, pointing out that needed research was being retarded due to rigid cutbacks in Federal funding.

The convention adopted unanimously three resolutions. One dealt with a request to be made to the legislature to increase aid to the blind from \$215 a month to \$265 a month, with an escalator clause to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living. A second resolution deplored the poor

administration by the State Bureau of Services for the Blind. The third resolution dealt with a request to the Secretary of HEW to liberalize the amount a working spouse can retain for his own support before the balance of his earnings are considered income to the SSI recipient.

All sessions of the convention were ably presided over by the president of the NFB of Nevada, Audrey Tait.

The following officers were elected to serve for the ensuing year: president, Mrs.

Audrey Tait; first vice-president, K. O. Knudson; second vice-president, Mrs. Cleo Fellers; secretary, John Tait; treasurer, James Waggoner; chaplain, Mrs. Mary Ann Kyle; delegate to the NFB National Convention, Mrs. Tait; alternate, Ella Council. Members elected to the board of directors were Mrs. Waldo Kerner of Reno; Ella Council of Las Vegas; Carl Clontz of Hawthorne; and Josh Newman of Las Vegas.

The NFB of Nevada plans to hold its 1975 annual convention in Reno. □

## KENTUCKY CONVENTION

BY

BETTY NICELEY

Kentucky is the land of blue grass, fast horses, and staunch Federationism. This grand State held its twenty-fifth convention on September 6, 7, and 8 at the Holiday Inn, N.E., in Louisville. It was a gala occasion, and the best attended convention we have had. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan put the icing on the cake by coming down to help us celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary.

We were fortunate enough to secure news coverage on television and in the newspaper. Dr. Jernigan appeared on both radio and television talk shows while here. The radio show was one of those which allows the listening audience to telephone the guest. You will be proud to know that our NFB President did an excellent job with those Council members who were brave enough to call in. We had an extensive display of aids and appliances for the blind. Such items as the Optacon, the Apollo Laser closed-circuit TV reader, and

Tim Cranmer's calculator were demonstrated.

The program was a little unusual this year because so many of our own blind people throughout the State participated. Bob Arnold, newly elected president of the Young Democrats Club, is a blind man who talked about what it's like to be a part of the political scene. The new superintendent of our State school for the blind, Will D. Evans, is partially-sighted. He shared with us some of the plans for the future of the school. Enoch Hamed entered the world of blindness about two years ago. It was very interesting to listen to some of his first impressions. Also, there was a panel consisting of blind and partially-seeing teachers in various levels of the educational system. Betty Gissoni and her dog guide, Jan, were on hand to answer questions and distribute literature concerning the training and use of dogs as guides for the blind.

Attendance at the banquet went over the 160 mark. Decorative gavels were given to

Harold Reagan and Bob Whitehead, the organization's only past presidents. Also, Kenneth Jernigan was presented with a Colonel's Commission. He then stood to face his troops as he laid out the plans for victory in the battles just ahead. If all Kentucky Federationists are willing to follow the directions given them by the word and example of Dr. Jernigan, the movement can soar to unbelievable heights.

After a rather spirited election,

Kentucky's new officers are as follows: Charles Allen, president; Margaret Bourne, first vice-president; Mike Bell, second vice-president; James Rader, third vice-president; Peggy Peak, recording secretary; Pat Vice, treasurer; Betty Niceley, corresponding secretary.

Our new leader is young, energetic, and a good Federationist. We are looking forward to an active and rewarding year. □

### INDIANA CONVENTION

BY

MARC MAURER

This year's convention of the Indiana Council of the Blind, our affiliate in Indiana, was truly a convention of firsts. There were so many exciting events that it is difficult to decide where to start in telling of them. For the first time, we awarded to the most loyal and beloved member of our affiliate the Dinsmore Award for outstanding and devoted service. The award went to Mrs. Jean Wagner of Evansville.

For the first time, we as an organization adopted as a matter of policy the practice of giving a percentage of our annual fundraising proceeds to our national treasury. This policy was adopted unanimously and with the understanding that it would in no way preclude or distract from the giving of private donations to our national treasury. In fact, those private donations are on the increase.

For the first time, the librarian of our library for the blind asserted that the blind, being the group most seriously concerned with library service, would have a

committee to advise and assist the library in obtaining space and funds for expanding and improving library services for the blind in our State. The library committee plans to meet with Miss Wishard very soon to begin with our new plans. Miss Wishard also announced her retirement effective in January of 1975.

For the first time, we had an affirmative report from our fundraising committee. This was the first time because the committee came into being only five short months ago. It was recognized that our vice-president would need assistance in the arduous task of fundraising and the proof of the value of our committee is the increase in the number of dollars of income.

For the first time, we had a report of the editors of our new publication, the *Watchword*. In awarding a charter to a new chapter in our State, the National Federation of the Blind of Bloomington, and in giving a charter to the re-organized chapter with a new name, the National

Federation of the Blind of Northwest Indiana, we gave recognition for the first time to the vital forces which these chapters are in the organized blind movement in Indiana.

Mr. James Gashel, our Washington Representative, was with us in Fort Wayne for the twenty-first annual convention of the Indiana Council of the Blind, and his talk was inspiring to us all. The banquet address, which dealt with the normality and the dignity of the blind, was undoubtedly planned to fit between our battles with the National Accreditation Council.

It must also be said that one of the firsts of this year was the declaration that this affiliate made against a NAC accredited agency in our own State. The circumstances surrounding that declaration are most interesting. The director of the agency for the blind in our State, one Rodney J. Kossick, came to our convention and told us of the changes that he has made in rehabilitation in Indiana during the last year. We then reminded him that his agency is buying services from another agency in Indiana which is NAC accredited. Mr. Kossick told us that he was always in favor of fighting for the rights of the blind, and cited us a couple of examples on his own to support the contention that he was a fighter for the blind. We asked that he join with us and not buy services from a NAC agency and thus support NAC, and he replied that the support was not very great. Our response, characteristically, was that support is support. We added that the agency in question did not only support NAC, which in the face of it is intolerable, but that while being NAC accredited it paid to many of its blind workers forty cents an hour, and that the workers had no rights of

collective bargaining or grievances committees. Mr. Kossick then told us that he would not, under any circumstances, seek accreditation from NAC unless he told us first that he was going to do so.

We asked that he go one step further and refuse to give his support to a NAC accredited agency. The response was that Mr. Kossick would have to think it over. We said that we couldn't wait forever for him to think it over and wanted to know when we could expect that this thinking would be accomplished. It could not be done in a month, said Mr. Kossick, and neither could it be done by Christmas. It was our decision that we could not wait forever for that which is our birthright, and, therefore, we were not willing to wait until after Christmas for an agency director, hired with our tax money, to study a matter which is of the essence of our being, that is, the right to vote and the right to make the decisions which affect our lives.

Later, the director of the agency from which Mr. Kossick buys services, Mr. Frank Kern, spoke to us. Mr. Kern was asked to comment on NAC but declined to do so. He said that he wasn't prepared to speak on the subject and indicated that he hadn't had time to think it over. Our reply was that in no way could this be called a new issue. Our president, Marc Maurer, had had a meeting with Mr. Kern in his office over a year ago at which the subject of NAC had come up, and the suggestion of Mr. Kern had been that the president of the Indiana Council of the Blind leave. Also, a letter asking for the official position of Mr. Kern's agency, the Evansville Association of the Blind, was mailed to Mr. Kern, and, by his own statement, received by him last January. Accompanying this letter was a

NAC-pac. Mr. Kern alleges that he gave the letter to his board of directors and that they did not feel that a reply was warranted. Then we read a resolution concerning NAC and the Evansville Association for the Blind. Mr. Kern was asked if he wanted to speak either before or after the reading of the resolution, and he averred that it would be "inappropriate at this time." It is not, however, inappropriate for the blind to demand that our rights be recognized now or at any other time, and so we adopted the resolution unanimously.

The insurance commissioner's office told us that whenever we come upon discrimination in insurance, we should bring it to the insurance commissioner's office and it will be handled. The representative said that unless an insurance company can prove that the blind are a higher risk, they cannot refuse to sell insurance to the blind or refuse to sell us insurance except at a higher rate. The insurance commissioner's office, like the Indiana State Library, was most helpful and cooperative.

A number of resolutions were passed, among them one to raise the level of the SSI check to Indiana recipients. The legislative committee, under the able leadership of Richard Richhart, is working on the bill to get this change made in our State. Our resolutions also supported disability insurance, called for a committee to work on the problems of the library in our State, supported the Randolph-Sheppard legislation (and while we were in the convention it was decided that we should send mailgrams to our representative John Brademas and to Karl Perkins, which was done on the spot), calling for the disaccreditation by the Evansville Association, and, as is only right, condemning the intolerable actions and make-up of NAC. This lively and tremendous convention was graced with visitors from our neighboring State of Ohio, and we hope to return the favor. We decided to meet in Terre Haute next year where our one-year-olds chapter is going strong. You all come; we shall surely have, as our President Jernigan says, "a real rounder of a convention." □



## ILLINOIS CONVENTION

BY

ALLEN SCHAEFER

The Howard Johnson Motor Lodge in Peoria was the site of the sixth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois. Everyone enjoyed an evening of hospitality on Friday, August 16, 1974. President Norman Bolton opened the business session Saturday morning. In addition to several reports, the highlight of the morning was a presentation on services to the blind in the Peoria area. Panelists represented: Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, the Peoria Area Blind Peoples Center, the Illinois Valley Library System, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Security. Saturday afternoon's agenda included reports from the Governor's Committee on the Handicapped, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State of Illinois. We were privileged again to have Mr. John Taylor represent the National Office and provide inspiration and information throughout the convention. His enthusiastic address was the pinnacle of the Saturday evening banquet.

During the Sunday morning business session Mr. Taylor led a discussion

evaluating the NFB of Illinois, and many constructive suggestions for improvements were presented. Seven positions were filled in the election of officers. Allen Schaefer, a public school music teacher from Mazon, was elected president. Other officers elected were: first vice-president, Steve Benson, Chicago; second vice-president, Norman Bolton, Rockford; secretary, Charlene Scanavino, Gardner; treasurer, David Carroll, Lansing. New board members elected were: Susan Lopez of Forest Park and Peter Grunwald of Chicago. William Fuller of Mount Sterling was elected to fill Allen Schaefer's unexpired term on the board. The other board position is held by Rami Rabby.

Seven resolutions were approved by the convention. To become a large and vibrant organization concerned with the needs and interests of the blind of the entire State and to assume a statewide perspective, our primary goal for next year will be the establishment of three new chapters in downstate Illinois. □



## IDAHO CONVENTION

BY

LINDA WARRICK

The thirty-ninth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho was held at the Lewis-Clark Ponderosa Motor Inn in Lewiston, Idaho. Convention activities began Friday afternoon and evening with registration, an executive board meeting, and a resolutions committee meeting. The convention adjourned at 11:30 a.m. Sunday, with conventioners going to Pioneer Park to enjoy a delicious picnic dinner sponsored by the Lewis-Clark chapter. Approximately one hundred enthusiastic NFBI members were present.

Saturday morning our State president, Ruth Shove, called to order what proved to be a very interesting and stimulating convention.

After Mayor Lenard Williams gave us a warm welcome to Lewiston, our president reported on the progress we had made in the past year. Last fall, when the Idaho Commission for the Blind was threatened with the possibility of being reorganized into one of the super-agencies, many NFBI members throughout the State were on hand to testify before the Reorganization Committee as it traveled to various areas of Idaho. We are happy to say that through our testimony we were able to convince the committee of the importance of having our commission remain a separate agency.

Our president also reported on another accomplishment of the NFBI in the past year. Through the time and effort spent by many NFBI members, we were able to obtain a library for the blind and physically

handicapped. This library is housed in the Idaho State Library building. The State Library began its service to us July 1, 1973.

Mr. Kenneth Hopkins, our national representative as well as director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, brought us up-to-date on matters concerning us nationally, such as NAC, and the new proposed rules of the FAA. In fact, he testified on behalf of the Idaho Commission for the Blind concerning those rules. We appreciate the efforts of Ken Hopkins both on the State and National level.

Joseph Cicrich from the Lewiston Social Security office spoke to us on problems and progress in the SSI program. At the conclusion of his talk, he opened the floor to questions and an informative discussion followed.

Helen Miller from the Idaho State Library told us about library service. In its first year of service to the blind and physically handicapped, service continues to expand and the number of persons being served by the library continues to increase. At this time we would like to commend Helen Miller and all of the other employees of the Idaho State Library for what they have been doing to make such excellent service possible.

Shortly after lunch, the student division found a few moments to meet and discuss its past year's activities and make future plans.

The afternoon session began with the Idaho Commission report given by Director Kenneth Hopkins. The Idaho Commission for the Blind has been as responsive to the needs of the blind of Idaho this year as it has in the past. We are moving ahead to better services in the future with the opening of two regional offices. One will be located in the northern area and the other in the eastern area of the State.

During the afternoon session there were two excellent panel discussions. The first was entitled "Blindness and Education" moderated by Ray Halverson. The second was a panel concerning public relations work, chaired by Dick Jones. During this panel discussion, NFB candy was passed around for the group to try. Plans for the sale of NFB candy are now under way.

During her talk, Kay Pell from the State Office on Aging stressed the importance of the blind having a representative on each area council. A resolution concerning this subject was sent to each area and it has met with a very good response. We should mention here that since the convention, we have been invited to serve on each area council.

A special feature of each State convention is the banquet. Dick Jones

proved to be an excellent master of ceremonies. As is customary at all of our State conventions, many door prizes were drawn. This year's grand prize was a hundred dollar bill. A somewhat lesser prize was won by our master of ceremonies, Dick Jones. His prize was a quarter which was buried in a small box of sawdust. This prize is certainly no reflection on the job Dick did as our master of ceremonies. Better luck next time, Dick.

Our banquet speaker was NFB Executive Committee member Kenneth Hopkins. He presented the history of the NFB and pointed out that our goal has always been to press forward. He challenged us to continue in that direction.

Emery Headland, a staunch supporter of the NFB and a legislator who has worked very diligently on our behalf, received the annual Thelander Award.

The Sunday morning session was devoted to chapter reports, the selection of a delegate to represent us in Chicago, and other State business.

In conclusion, we would like to say thanks to the Lewis-Clark chapter members for the great job they did in hosting this year's State convention. □

# RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BY

LAVYRL JOHNSON

*Editor's Note.—LaVyrl Johnson—Pinkie to her many friends—is a long time, very active Federationist who is a member of the Alameda County Chapter, NFB of California.*

## BEEF STROGANOFF

### Ingredients

1 pound beef cut into strips	½ cup water
½ cup green pepper, chopped	1 can condensed mushroom soup
½ cup celery, chopped	1 cup sour cream
½ cup mushrooms, sliced	

### Method

Brown the meat, add bell pepper, celery, mushrooms, and water and simmer until tender. Add mushroom soup and sour cream and simmer about an hour longer. Serve over noodles or rice. □

## MONITOR MINIATURES

Federationists, affiliates, and chapters are reminded by Endowment Fund chairman Lawrence Marcelino that the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund needs money. You are urged to take up collections for the Endowment Fund at your meetings and prepare for the honor roll call of the states at the National Convention, at which time the states will present their contributions or announce their pledges to the Endowment Fund.

The White Elephant Sale at the last annual Convention was very successful. It netted \$860. It is hereby announced that there will be a White Elephant Sale at the 1975 annual Convention. This will not be just another white elephant sale but an

elegant white elephant sale. Federationists are invited to volunteer their services in conducting the sale and especially in soliciting elegant elephants from chapter members who cannot attend.

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The NFB of Watertown, Massachusetts, has new officers: president, Ralph Cushman; first vice-president, Eugene Raschi; second vice-president, Miss Dorothy Ingersoll; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Mary Czub; and treasurer, Mrs. Linda Cress.

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The Electronic and Education Services of New Jersey presents a weekly radio program called "Radio Reader." Volunteers read selections from books, magazines, and newspapers for blind people. The program also interviews guests such as social security people, librarians, and rehabilitation workers.

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In ruling invalid regulations cutting Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the California Supreme Court asserted that "a society that sacrifices the health and well-being of its young upon the false altar of economy endangers its own future and, indeed, its own survival." The decision said the AFDC regulations that were ostensibly designed to implement the 1971 State Welfare Reform Act were actually in conflict with it. "The State Social Welfare Department's desire to cut welfare expenses at any cost," the ruling held, "has led it to disregard of the clear guidelines of its legislative mandate. An administrative of the welfare program that discards statutory mandate to reduce relief to the indigent young cannot be sustained." The regulations in question reduced benefits paid to AFDC children who shared housing with recipients of other welfare programs or who were taken into homes of "non-needy relatives." The State based its regulations on the theory that non-cash economic benefits enjoyed by certain AFDC recipients may be treated as income for them so as to warrant reduction in welfare grants.

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On Tuesday, September 3, the Washington County Chapter of the NFB of Pennsylvania held its regular monthly

meeting. Secretary Michael Risco reported that, "due to the death of our president, Joseph O'Brochata, last June and the resignation of George Peterson from the vice-presidency at our May meeting, we had to hold a special election. The officers elected are as follows: Rev. William Hopson, president; Mr. Clarence Murchant, vice-president; Mr. Michael Risko, secretary; Mr. Melvin Carroll, treasurer; and Mr. Duane Polan, chaplain."

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The Advisory Council on Social Security, appointed last April, has launched a major study of the over-all financial requirements of the Social Security system and will make recommendations to Congress before the end of the year. The study was started after the annual reports of the trustees on the four Social Security trust funds to Congress indicated "that the Social Security system has sufficient revenue for the next five-to-ten years but points to a need for additional future financing." Long-range financial requirements for the system have been adjusted upward because of a higher rate of inflation than was projected previously, and also because the Nation is approaching zero population growth faster than anticipated. Beginning next year, automatic increases in cash benefits will be determined by quarterly increases in the Consumer Price Index, designed to make Social Security inflation-proof. One alternative to increasing payroll taxes for future financial needs of the system would be to use general revenues for specific purposes.

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Robert L. Hunt informs us that on September 15, 1974, Mr. Earl D. Fisher

took over as president of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind.

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Mary Hartle writes that the student division of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind had its first anniversary in August. Elections for new officers were held at the State convention on August 17. Re-elected as president was Suzanne Bridges, who is working for a Ph. D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of South Carolina. Also, James Robinson was re-elected as vice-president. The other officers are: Sheila Byrd, secretary, and Otis Bosler, treasurer, both of whom are new to the movement. Welcome to the Federation, Sheila and Otis.

The student division, like others, meets quarterly. It has made great progress in its first year. The division sponsored a raffle at the State convention; set up a reader service for the approximately twenty students who attend the University of South Carolina; is planning to sell NFB candy and use the profits to send college students to the National Convention. A striking resolution, which was presented by the chapter at the State convention and which subsequently passed, stated that students are disillusioned with the South Carolina Commission for the Blind and its services to blind college students. Students charge that college sponsorship is subjectively and unequally granted. They also disapprove of the agency requiring students to undergo psychological tests and evaluations before the State funds their college education.

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Mary Brunoli, corresponding secretary of the Greater Hartford Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut writes that at a meeting held on September 15, 1974, the following persons were elected: president, Mrs. Shirley Lebowitz; first vice-president, Mr. Ben Snow; second vice-president, Mr. Joseph Blette; corresponding secretary, Miss Mary Brunoli; recording secretary, Miss Donna Johnson; treasurer, Miss Joyce Lebowitz; directors, Mr. Ralph Mackinnon and Mr. James Schwarzhaupt; and delegate to the State convention, Mr. Joseph Blette.

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In 1974, the Nebraska Legislature passed a statute which provided for the creation of a thirteen-member Coordinating Council for the Handicapped. The thirteen members have been appointed and are all in administrative positions in agencies which serve the handicapped in one way or another and include the following: Services for the Visually Impaired, Welfare, Social Services, Medical Services, Department of Institutions, Department of Rehabilitation, and the principals of both the school for the deaf and the school for the blind, among others. There is also a provision for non-voting ex-officio representatives of private associations, groups, and organizations of the handicapped. Since membership to the latter groups is available by simple request to the Coordinating Council, it should be sizeable.

The Council had its first meeting on September 11, 1974. Dr. James Nyman, director of Services for the Visually Impaired, was elected chairman and Lawrence Nedrow, who is a post-polio, director of Social Services in the Department of Welfare.



The duties listed in the statute are: (1) coordinate programs for the handicapped, including children from birth; (2) maintain a directory of services available to the handicapped in the State of Nebraska; (3) distribute information to parents, doctors, and other persons concerning services; (4) initiate coordinate plans by and between agencies and departments of the State, private associations, organizations, and corporations for the handicapped; (5) maintain records and information concerning handicapping conditions and the handicapped; (6) make recommendations to the public and private agencies working with the handicapped concerning needs for agency services for areas in which coordination of services may benefit the handicapped.

The Council was provided with no budget, and it is estimated that to fulfill the duties assigned by the statute would require at a minimum about \$250 000. A meeting was scheduled for October 11, and, though it is too early at this writing to know, it is hoped that the deliberations resulted in some ideas for funding.

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Do you enjoy drama? Would you like to be part of an amateur drama troupe in the New York City area? The Elbee Audio Players, a blind and sighted repertory troupe, now beginning its thirteenth season, again invites blind and partially sighted men and women to join them. They use an audio format exclusively. No experience is necessary but one should be a competent Braille reader or be able to read large type. Anyone interested in an opportunity for creative self-expression through drama should write David

Swerdlow, 621 West End Avenue, New York, New York 10024.

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Federal funds have been allocated to build a new two million dollar blind and low vision rehabilitation center at the Palo Alto (California) Veterans Hospital. It was made necessary because the existing building is moderately hazardous insofar as earthquakes are concerned and is uneconomical to reinforce.

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The Social Security Administration and the Treasury Department will begin a system this year for paying Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients by credit to their accounts in financial institutions. This payment method, called "direct deposit," will be entirely optional. The new method is the result of an SSA and Treasury Department study of a way to implement Public Law 92-366, which provides that payments could be made by direct credit to the accounts of beneficiaries at financial institutions. An SSA spokesman said that the new system would be a great safety factor for the elderly and would eliminate difficulty in negotiating the checks. Also, many recipients live in high crime areas where mailbox thefts occur frequently.

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The development of an electronic device enabling photo-sensitive, partially blind people to read materials more quickly and easily has been announced by Visualtek, a manufacturer of electronic visual aids. Most people who have visual problems are and abnormally sensitive to general light levels.



manufacturer of electronic visual aids. Most people who have visual problems are also abnormally sensitive to general light levels. The new electronic line marker allows a reader to darken all but the one an exclusive Visualtek design, can be factory-installed on all new models of Visualtek's electronic viewers. Each viewing

set combines a closed-circuit television camera and a special magnifying lens with a highly developed illuminating system, enabling partially sighted people with perception as low as 5/800 to view reading materials and their own handwriting or typing, displayed up to sixty times original size, on a television screen. □





